



PHD

The Political Economy of Social Policy and Agrarian Transformation in Ethiopia

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The political economy of social policy and agrarian transformation in Ethiopia

Tom Lavers

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Social and Policy Sciences

March 2013

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Finally, the thesis draws on a number of secondary data sources: first, data produced by the Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD), which was based at the University of Bath and was funded by the ESRC; second, the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS). ERHS data have been made available by the Economics Department, Addis Ababa University, the Centre for the Study of African Economies, University of Oxford and the International Food Policy Research Institute. Funding for data collection was provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the preparation of the public release version of these data was supported, in part, by the World Bank. AAU, CSAE, IFPRI, ESRC, SIDA, USAID and the World Bank are not responsible for any errors in these data or for their use or interpretation.

Declaration of previously submitted material

A previous version of chapter four, part of the framework in chapter two and part of the methodology in chapter three were submitted as my dissertation for the MRes in International Development at the University of Bath in September 2009. Small parts of the methodology in chapter three were also submitted for the Qualitative Methods I (XX50136) coursework as part of the MRes.

In addition, two articles drawn from the thesis have already been published in *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. In particular, parts of chapters five, nine and ten have been published as:

Lavers, T., 2012. "Land grab" as development strategy? The political economy of agricultural investment in Ethiopia. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39 (1), 105–132.

Parts of chapters eight, nine and ten have been published as:

Lavers, T., 2012. Patterns of agrarian transformation in Ethiopia: State-mediated commercialisation and the "land grab". *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(3-4), 795-822.

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with social policy during structural transformation, focusing on the case of Ethiopia. The thesis takes a realist, case-based approach to the study of social policy, which recognises that political actors construct the domain of 'social' policy within legitimising discourses in specific national-historical contexts. Social policy is a key aspect of state-society relations and an inherently political field of study. Consequently, the study integrates analysis of cleavages in domestic society along class and ethnic lines, the role of state organisations and international influences, and their impact on the social policy pronouncements by senior government officials and implementation of those policies on the ground.

In the Ethiopian case, this approach highlights the centrality of land to social policy and state-society relations. In particular, state land ownership is a key part of the government's development strategy that aims to combine egalitarian agricultural growth with security for smallholders. Nevertheless, the failure to expand the use of productivity-enhancing agricultural inputs, which constitute key complements to the use of land for social objectives, has led to differentiation in social policy provision along class, gender, age and ethnic lines. Micro-level case studies link the land question to food security, including the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), and processes of agricultural commercialisation, notably the so-called 'global land grab'.

A main argument of the thesis is that the Ethiopian government is attempting to manage social processes in order to minimise the social and political upheaval involved in structural transformation, and that social policy is a central means by which it does so. The development strategy requires social policies that enable the government to control the allocation of factors of production, necessitating restrictions on the rights of individuals and groups. As such, this strategy is intricately intertwined with political authority.

Abbreviations

ADLI	Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation
AISD	Agricultural Investment Support Directorate
ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
ASS	Agricultural Sample Survey
BLEP	Bureau of Land and Environmental Protection
BoEPLAU	Bureau of Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use
CCI	Complementary Community Investments
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
CSAE	Centre for the Study of African Economies
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
DA	Development Agent
DBE	Development Bank of Ethiopia
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DPPO	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Office
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
ECX	Ethiopian Commodity Exchange
EIA	Ethiopian Investment Agency
ELTAP	Ethiopian Land Tenure and Administration Program
EPLAUA	Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use Agency
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERHS	Ethiopian Rural Household Survey
ESDA	Ethiopian Sugar Development Agency
ESE	Ethiopian Seed Enterprise
EU	European Union
EVS	Ethiopian Village Studies
FAO	United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FSP	Food Security Programme
FSTF	Food Security Task Force
FTC	Farmer Training Centre
GBS	General Budget Support
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HABP	Household Asset Building Programme
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute

IIED	International Institute for the Environment and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LAC	Land Administration Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NAEIP	National Agricultural Extension Intervention Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLF	Oromiya Liberation Front
ONC	Oromo National Congress
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
ONRG	Oromiya National Regional Government
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organisation
PADETES	Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System
PASDEP	A Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PBS	Protection of Basic Services
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SARDP	Sweden-Amhara Rural Development Programme
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TNRG	Tigray National Regional Government
TPLF	Tigrayan People's Liberation Front
UEDF	United Ethiopian Democratic Forces
UJD	Unity for Justice and Democracy
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WeD	Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries

Glossary

Notes on language

Ethiopian languages contain several vowels and consonants that are not used in English, and there is no standard transcription of the Ethiopian alphabet in English. Where I use words in Ethiopian languages I have used the English vowels, which, in my opinion, most closely correspond to the Ethiopian vowels. I have not attempted to mark the so-called ‘explosive’ consonants in Ethiopian languages.

Where I refer to a plural of a noun in an Ethiopian language, I have used the singular (e.g. *wereda*) rather than using the actual plural (e.g. *weredawoch*), which is likely to lead to confusion to English speakers, or adding an ‘s’ as in English (e.g. *weredas*), which would be inaccurate.

Finally, Ethiopian names consist of a given name followed by the father’s given name. As such, there is no family name and it makes little sense to cite authors by their second name, as is usually the case in western academic publications and media. Instead, in this thesis where Ethiopian authors are referenced, the author’s full name is cited and the bibliography is sorted by the authors first name.

Afaan Oromo terms

<i>Aba Gadaa</i>	Literally the ‘father of the <i>gadaa</i> ’, the political leader under the <i>gadaa</i> system.
<i>Aba Gandaa</i>	District officials under the <i>moti</i> , a king, in pre-Imperial Oromiya.
<i>Balbala</i>	A lineage.
<i>Dhaaluu</i>	A custom whereby a woman who is widowed is required to marry a male relative of her deceased husband.
<i>Gadaa</i>	The customary system of social and political organisation in Oromiya.
<i>Gamtaa</i>	A farmers’ cooperative.
<i>Gosa</i>	A clan.
<i>Waldaa</i>	A farmers’ union.

Amharic terms

<i>Areqi</i>	A distilled grain spirit.
<i>Belg</i>	The short rainy season in March/April.
<i>Birr</i>	The Ethiopian currency (£1 was approximately 25 <i>birr</i> in September 2010).
<i>Chat</i>	<i>Catha edulis</i> . A bush whose leaves are chewed as a mild stimulant. Also known as <i>qat</i> .
<i>Derg</i>	Literally a ‘council’, refers to the military Marxist regime that ruled Ethiopia from 1974-1991.
<i>Equb</i>	A rotating credit and savings association.
<i>Gare</i>	An administrative unit of government below the <i>gott</i> .

<i>Gasha</i>	A unit of land measurement (1 <i>gasha</i> is 40 hectares).
<i>Gebbar</i>	Tribute paying peasants during the Imperial era.
<i>Gott</i>	An administrative unit of government below the <i>kebele</i> .
<i>Gult</i>	A land grant during the Imperial era.
<i>Gultegna</i>	Landlords granted land by the Emperor.
<i>Iddir</i>	A burial society.
<i>Injera</i>	A sourdough flatbread, the staple food in highland Ethiopia.
<i>Kebele</i>	A sub-district. An administrative unit of government below the <i>wereda</i> .
<i>Kilil</i>	National regional states under ethnic federalism.
<i>Meher</i>	The long rainy season from June to September.
<i>Neftegna</i>	Literally ‘rifleman’. In Imperial times the name was used for settlers, usually soldiers from the north, appointed by the Emperor as landlords in the south.
<i>Rist</i>	The dominant tenure system in northern Ethiopia in Imperial times which provided access to land based on descent from a common ancestor.
<i>Ristegna</i>	Peasant farmers belonging to a <i>rist</i> .
<i>Shifta</i>	A bandit or thief.
<i>Shimagle</i>	An elder.
<i>Teff</i>	<i>Eragrostis abyssinica</i> . A cereal with fine grains native to Ethiopia.
<i>Tella</i>	A dark homemade beer made from barley.
<i>Timad</i>	A unit of land measurement (1 <i>timad</i> is 0.25 hectares).
<i>Wereda</i>	A district. An administrative unit of government below the zone, comprising several <i>kebele</i> .
<i>Wot</i>	A spicy stew.

Tigrigna terms

<i>Gebri</i>	A unit of land measurement. Notionally, the amount of land that can be ploughed by a pair of oxen in a day.
<i>Kiremti</i>	The long rainy season from June to August.
<i>Kushet</i>	A unit of local government administration, below the <i>tabiya</i> .
<i>Risti</i>	The dominant tenure system in northern Ethiopia in Imperial times which provided access to land based on descent from a common ancestor.
<i>Sugum</i>	The short rainy season from March to April.
<i>Tabiya</i>	The equivalent of a <i>kebele</i> in Tigray.

*For Shea, without whom I would not have started,
and Alice, who provided the motivation to finish.*

PART ONE

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

1

Introduction

This thesis is about the political economy of state social policy in the process of development. 'Development' in Ethiopia, like in other developing countries, has become the overarching stated objective of the government. Though conceptions of exactly what development consists undoubtedly vary, for the government it involves a series of transitions which will transform Ethiopia from a 'backward' country to a prosperous, 'modern' one; from a situation where poverty is widespread to one where poverty is eradicated; from an agrarian society to an urban, industrial one; from a non-democratic political system to a full democracy.

In part these objectives represent the aspirations of policymakers and citizens. However, they are also influenced by global development discourses, which at various times have stressed the importance of economic growth, basic needs, poverty reduction, democratisation and human rights. The adoption of poverty reduction as the principal objective of the development industry in the last decade (Mosley *et al.* 2004) has contributed to the acceptance of an important state role in social provision, in particular regarding social protection and social services. Meanwhile, research on social policy examining historical cases has highlighted a wide range of roles that social policy can play in development (Kwon 2004, Kangas and Palme 2005a, Adésínà 2007, Riesco 2007), encompassing and surpassing those envisaged by the poverty reduction agenda. Social policy can protect individuals and groups from risks and vulnerabilities, redistribute resources to promote equality, provide productive investments which contribute to economic growth, and support the social reproduction of individuals, households and societies (Mkandawire 2004a, UNRISD 2010).

Examination of social policy in the transition from an agrarian economy to one based on industry and services raises a number of issues related to aspects of the 'agrarian question' (Byres 1991, Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010a, 2010b). The first concerns the contribution of agriculture to industrialisation. Given that the importance of the agricultural sector declines as national wealth increases, while industry has, historically, expanded, should governments focus all available resources on industry to the neglect of agriculture (Wharton Jr. 1969, Fox and Johnson 1970), or

can agriculture play a vital role supporting industrialisation (Lewis 1954, Kaldor 1960, Kuznets 1964, Mellor 1998)?

Second, the changes involved in industrialisation and urbanisation frequently contribute to major social upheaval resulting from new sources of insecurity, and the transformation of family and community structures which previously provided informal support mechanisms (Moore, Jr. 1967, Thompson 1968, Polanyi 2001). Furthermore, many scholars consider rising inequality to be an inevitable part of industrialisation (Kuznets 1955, Galbraith 2008). While this social upheaval was evident in early industrialising countries, research on 'late industrialisers' in Scandinavia and East Asia shows that the displacement of smallholder farmers is not always a pre-requisite for increased agricultural productivity and that agrarian transformation can be a relatively equitable and even a 'tranquil' process (Alestalo and Kuhnle 1987, p. 10, Byres 1991, Chang 2009). The question remains therefore under what circumstances social policy can mitigate social upheaval, without obstructing, or even promoting the contribution of agriculture to industrialisation?

Finally, in several respects, the process of structural transformation is difficult to reconcile with the rights and freedoms that underpin democratic systems, calling into question the compatibility between structural transformation and democratisation. Structural transformation frequently involves violence by one class against another (Moore, Jr. 1967), while structural transformation in most developed countries took place under authoritarian rule or limited democracies where political rights were restricted. Furthermore, according to some scholars, a certain level of urbanisation and industrialisation are pre-conditions of democratisation (Huntington 1991, Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992), questioning the possibility of democratic accountability in agrarian societies.

Historically social policy has played ambiguous roles in political development. On the one hand, 'social policy developments were part of the process of democratic stabilization and class compromise in most of the European democratic survivors' (Stephens 2007, pp. 47–9). On the other hand, authoritarian governments have frequently used social policies to control their populations, restricting individual and group rights (Gough 1979). In either case, social policy choices are inherently political decisions concerning the prioritisation and distribution of resources, while the extent to which social policies promote security or restrict freedoms is closely related to political representation.

While this thesis focuses primarily on Ethiopia, key themes in the analysis concern these debates regarding structural transformation, insecurity, inequality and political development. As such, this study is of relevance to a broad range of academics, in addition to those focusing on Ethiopia.

Social policy and agrarian transformation in Ethiopia

This thesis analyses Ethiopian social policy as a whole, stressing the inter-related nature of public policies and their socioeconomic context, rather than focusing on the evaluation of individual programmes. As such, the research is concerned with the relationship between social policy, economic policy and state-society relations. Analysis of public policy frequently focuses primarily on the strategies and laws formulated by government ministries and senior policymakers (e.g.

Sabatier 1999). Indeed, policy formulation constitutes one key thread of this thesis' analysis. However, this research also goes beyond analysis of policy formulation, examining how policy pronouncements are adapted in particular contexts by local government administrators (Lipsky 1980, Grindle and Thomas 1991, Migdal 2001). Arguably, decisions by local government officials are most influential in determining social outcomes for programme participants (Harriss 1988). In addition, given the inherently political nature of social policy (Stephens 2007, Hickey 2011), the thesis analyses social policy as a key aspect of state-society relations, considering the political implications of policy reform and continuity.

As such, the thesis addresses three research questions. The first two concern the nature of state social policy and the role it plays in the development strategy:

- *How are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?*
- *How are these social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?*

The third research question asks:

- *What are the implications of this social policy strategy for state-society relations?*

Ethiopia has one of the lowest levels of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in the world, while 82 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, relying primarily on agricultural livelihoods, and agriculture contributes 48 per cent of GDP (source: World Bank WDI). As such, the country is at a very early stage of structural transformation. Ethiopia has been governed since 1991 by the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). During the 1990s, former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi¹ was frequently praised in the West for being part of a 'new generation' of African leaders committed to the democratisation and liberalisation of their economies. Subsequently, however, doubts have been raised regarding Ethiopia's democratic credentials and, while some structural reforms have been undertaken, key parts of the economy remain under state control (Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael 2011).

Ethiopia provides an interesting case for several reasons. First, the Ethiopian state is recognised as an exception in sub-Saharan Africa since Ethiopia has a history spanning at least 2,000 years and it was the only African country to successfully resist European colonisation (Bahru Zewde 1991, Henze 2000). Furthermore, the Ethiopian government is commonly acknowledged to have an unusual capacity—among African governments—to get things done, with relatively little corruption and decisions taken by senior officials resulting in corresponding action at the local level (Furtado and Smith 2009). Consequently, Ethiopia is an unsatisfactory fit with the common portrayal of African states as colonial impositions that barely exist beyond the capital city (Chabal and Daloz 1999, Reno 1999, Bevan 2004, Harrison 2004).

Second, Ethiopia is recognised for its relative independence from donor influence (Borchgrevink 2008, Furtado and Smith 2009, Lavers 2009), unlike many other African countries (Harrison 2004, Whitfield 2009). The current government has used this autonomy to pursue a consistent

¹ Meles Zenawi was President of Ethiopia (1991-95) and Prime Minister from 1995 until his death in August 2012.

development strategy for the best part of 20 years (Dercon *et al.* 2009). This Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) strategy explicitly acknowledges the success of East Asian developmental states in combining industrial expansion, egalitarian economic growth and security for smallholders. The strategy defines land tenure as a key social policy issue, arguing that state land ownership protects smallholders from market risks, while promoting egalitarian growth. As such, the development strategy integrates social and economic objectives, in marked contrast to the poverty reduction approach that dominates the development industry and which relegates social policy to the residual of economic policy (ILO 2004, Mkandawire 2004b, Hickey 2008a).

Third, in 2005 the government and its foreign donors established the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), a cash and food-for-work programme that aims to provide medium-term, reliable transfers to food insecure households. This programme has received much attention and considerable praise from development studies practitioners and researchers as an example of a new generation of social policies suited to the demands of poverty reduction (Ellis *et al.* 2009, Hanlon *et al.* 2010).

Finally, national statistics suggest that the development strategy has had considerable success. Economic growth between 2004 and 2009 averaged 11.2 per cent (source: World Bank WDI), making Ethiopia one of the world's fastest growing economies, while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) suggests that Ethiopia has made good progress towards all Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (UNDP 2012).

Analysis of the political economy of Ethiopian social policy therefore enables examination of interactions between key actors including a relatively strong state, its foreign donors and societal groups. These interactions entail contestation regarding the balance of competing socioeconomic and political priorities including: economic growth, inequality, food security and poverty reduction.

Situating the study in the literature

This thesis analyses social policy in an agrarian economy and considers the implications of social policy for political development. As such, the research draws on contributions from three main literatures—social policy, agrarian studies and political studies. This section highlights relevant debates within these literatures as well as identifying gaps between them.

Social policy studies

Recent years have seen increased interest in social policy in developing countries as donors, focused on the MDGs, consider the role of the state in poverty reduction. This interest has contributed to recent research on social policy (Gough and Wood 2004a, Mkandawire 2004a, de Haan 2007, Dani and de Haan 2008), as well as interest in social protection programmes, such as conditional cash transfers (Ellis *et al.* 2009, Niño-Zarazúa *et al.* 2011). However within development studies, most research has either taken a normative view of *what should be done* or assessed the *social impacts of what is done*. Despite the inherently political nature of social

policy, much less attention has been paid to the politics of social policy in developing countries (Hickey 2008a, 2008b).

The academic field of social policy studies was established to study welfare states in industrial economies. Consequently, the main focus has been the role of social policy in protecting individuals from market and lifecycle risks. In adapting social policy studies to developing countries, some research has maintained a focus on the limited formal sector which most resembles developed economies (e.g. SSA and ISSA 2011). Within the development industry, meanwhile, policy initiatives and academic debates have increasingly emphasised social protection programmes. The World Bank's social protection framework (Holzmann and Jorgensen 1999) has been particularly influential in this regard (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

Nevertheless, many social protection policies address the symptoms of poverty (Niño-Zarazúa *et al.* 2011), rather than transforming the structures which create insecurity, inequality and poverty. Similarly, much research focuses on programme evaluation or policy design, assessing the relative benefits of targeting and delivery mechanisms (Ellis *et al.* 2009), rather than identifying the sources of poverty. While these debates are important, especially for practitioners designing policies, the effectiveness of a safety net policy cannot be fully assessed without analysis of the broader socioeconomic system which generates insecurity in the first place (Cook 2002).

These gaps in the literature also apply to Ethiopia. Thus far only one study has attempted an overarching analysis of Ethiopian social policy (Bevan 2006), building on a previous initiative to adapt Esping-Andersen's (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* to developing countries (Gough and Wood 2004a). Bevan's paper made important contributions regarding the division of institutional responsibility for social provision, concluding that state social policy is extremely limited and driven by international development organisations (Bevan 2006). Her findings do, however, differ from those presented in this thesis as a result of the detailed examination in this research of the social policy role of land in Ethiopia. Most studies considering Ethiopian social policy have had a more limited focus, including the evaluation of cash transfer programmes (e.g. Devereux *et al.* 2006, Sharp *et al.* 2006, Slater *et al.* 2006, Gilligan *et al.* 2009, Jones *et al.* 2010, Guush Berhane *et al.* 2011). These studies tend to take the socioeconomic context within which projects operate as given and, as this thesis will demonstrate, consequently miss key links with other policy areas.

Despite the limitations of the literature on social policy in developing countries, some lines of research have made important contributions, providing a starting point for the thesis. In particular, Standing (1999, 2010) highlights the effects of neo-liberal reforms and globalisation on social policy over the last 30 years. These reforms have resulted in the residualisation of social policy, leading to increased inequality, insecurity and class fragmentation. In addition, research at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), especially that by Thandika Mkandawire, integrated a broad conception of social policy into analysis of development paths and structural transformation (Mkandawire 2004a, UNRISD 2010). This research focused on the multiple roles of social policy, as well as the potential synergy between social and economic policy. Furthermore, work by Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) highlights the need for 'transformative social protection' to confront structural inequalities, placing politics and social justice at the forefront of the social policy agenda.

Agrarian studies

Agrarian studies is concerned with many issues of relevance to social policy and political economy in developing countries. Here I highlight two important themes—the implications of different systems of production for productivity and distribution, and the political ramifications of agrarian transformation (Bernstein and Byres 2001, Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010a, 2010b).

In an agrarian society, agricultural systems of production are the source of risks and opportunities for individuals and groups that constitute the terrain on which social issues are identified as problems requiring social policy intervention. An analysis of agricultural production therefore must form a central pillar of the study of social policy in an agrarian society. Consistent themes of agrarian studies include the relative productivity of different systems of production, the means of surplus extraction from the agricultural sector and the contribution of agriculture to industrialisation (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, Bernstein 2010). Key debates include: the relationship between farm size and productivity; the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture; and the land tenure regimes that underpin these systems of production (Berry and Cline 1979, Hart 1996, Sender and Johnston 2004, Collier 2008). Recent work involving Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler has begun to consider the links between social protection and agriculture, both in terms of the need to make social protection relevant to the risks of agricultural livelihoods and the role of social protection in promoting agricultural growth (Dorward *et al.* 2006, Devereux and Guenther 2007, Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* 2009).

Regarding Ethiopia, agrarian research has focused on the question of land ownership under different regimes (Dessalegn Rahmato 1984, 1993a, Griffin and Hay 1985, Berhanu Abegaz 2005). However, the debate has reached an impasse between ideologically-opposed proponents of private property rights, who understate the social upheaval inherent in the privatisation and consolidation of land (Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002, Berhanu Abegaz 2004, Dessalegn Rahmato 2009), and advocates of state ownership, primarily within the ruling party, who fail to problematise the state's role in land administration.

Another important theme of agrarian studies research has been the role of agrarian classes in political development. Barrington Moore's (1967) work has been particularly influential in highlighting the challenges for democratisation posed by a large peasantry and pre-capitalist landed elites (see also Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992). In Ethiopian studies, meanwhile, research has built on Moore (1967) and Skocpol (1979), using social structures to explain past revolution and regime change (Clapham 1988, Young 1997). Given the foundation of political authority in 'political economies of property relations' (Boone 2003, p. 12), analysis of agrarian change has continued relevance for political development.

Political studies

The final body of literature on which I draw comes from political science and public administration. Of particular relevance to this thesis are two main themes—debates regarding the nature of the state and the policymaking process, and the politics of social policy.

The literature on the state in developing countries and elsewhere is dominated by Weber's ideal type which famously highlights the 'monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force' (Gerth and

Mills 2003, p. 82). Research has often negatively compared African states with the rational-legal institutions, and separation of public and private spheres envisaged in Weber's model, leading to their dismissal as 'neo-patrimonial' (Clapham 1982, Bratton and van der Walle 1997, Chabal and Daloz 1999, Cromwell and Chintedza 2005). In contrast, work by Joel Migdal's *State-in-Society* approach has attempted to move beyond Weber, outlining an 'anthropology of the state' which questions assumptions of a unitary state, instead acknowledging both the deficiencies and capabilities of state organisations (Migdal 1988, 2001, Migdal *et al.* 1994).

Closely related to these debates is the literature on the policy process. The vast majority of research has focused on the role of high-level policymakers in policy formulation (Sabatier 1999) and, in doing so, has assumed an unproblematic relationship between policy and practice. Implicitly, this literature takes for granted the existence of state capacities that characterise Weber's ideal type. However, these assumptions are disputed by research which extensively demonstrates the limitations of states and the adaptation of policy during implementation (Harriss 1988, Migdal 1988, Grindle and Thomas 1991). Meanwhile, many studies have attempted to explain the development and transformation of welfare states from a variety of perspectives, highlighting the importance of class, ethnicity, state institutions and economic transformation (e.g. Korpi 1978, Pierson 1994, Huber and Stephens 2001, Standing 2010). On the whole, this literature, like that on public policy in general, focuses primarily on policy formulation and pays far less attention to implementation.

The politics of public policy has not been such a central theme of development studies, which has frequently slipped into technocratic rather than political analyses of social problems (Leftwich 1995, Hickey 2008a). Nevertheless, a number of studies have also made important contributions to the study of the politics of public policies in developing countries, upon which the present study can build. These include work by Merilee Grindle which examined the political economy of policy reforms in developing countries, including both decision making and policy implementation (Grindle 1980, Grindle and Thomas 1991); analysis of the politics of developmental states, including with respect to social policy (Leftwich 2000); and research by Hickey (2008a, 2008b, 2011, Niño-Zarazúa *et al.* 2011) which analyses the politics of social protection.

The argument and contributions of the thesis

A main argument of the thesis is that the Ethiopian government is attempting to manage social processes in order to minimise the social and political upheaval involved in structural transformation, and that social policy is a central means by which it does so. This development strategy requires social policies that enable the government to control factors of production such as labour, land and capital, necessitating restrictions on the rights of individuals and groups. As such, this development strategy is intricately intertwined with the demands of political authority.

Analysis of policies and strategies reveal the centrality of land tenure to social policy and politics in Ethiopia. Social policy discourses justify the state-led ADLI strategy and state land ownership based on the productivity of smallholder agriculture, the protection of peasant farmers and the maintenance of relative equality, drawing inspiration from the East Asian development states. In practice, however, ADLI has thus far been unable to replicate the success of state-led

development strategies in several East Asian countries. In particular, the state has failed to increase the supply and use of improved inputs, and without a significant increase in agricultural production, rapid population growth and stagnation of non-agricultural sectors have resulted in land shortages and limited incentives for farmers to invest in increased production. The thesis analyses food insecurity and the PSNP in this context and finds that in certain cases, rather than forming part of a transformative social protection strategy, the PSNP has maintained food insecure households in minimal, dependent security, with little hope of advancement.

Despite ADLI's social and economic challenges, the government's fear that peasant displacement would lead to political instability has ensured the continuation of state land ownership. Nevertheless, failings of government policies towards the smallholder sector have prompted the government to take advantage of international demand for farmland, promoting export-oriented agricultural investment in sparsely-populated lowlands. To do so, the government has questioned existing land use by pastoralists and shifting cultivators, continuing historical patterns of exploitation of the periphery by the centre and delineating one boundary of the use of land as a form of social protection.

The thesis makes a number of conceptual, methodological and empirical contributions to the existing literature. Rather than defining social policy as a particular set of commonly accepted policy instruments, the framework argues that social policy is socially constructed in specific national-historical contexts based on the political ideology of actors in the state and society. This conceptualisation does not limit social interventions to issues and instruments common in welfare states. Rather, social policy is a flexible concept reflecting the specific historical, economic and political contexts of developing countries.

In Ethiopia, this approach brings land tenure and issues of protection, equality and accumulation to the forefront of social policy debates, providing a new way of examining the land question, in contrast to the existing literature on land which focuses on economic efficiency (Dessalegn Rahmato 1991, 1993b, Yeraswork Admassie 2000, Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002, Berhanu Abegaz 2004, 2005, Samuel Gebreselassie 2006). In addition, the framework highlights the links between land tenure and food security (Maxwell and Wiebe 1999), underscoring the relationship between the land policy and the PSNP, which has been neglected in the existing literature. Furthermore, a social policy approach provides one means of conceptualising the recent wave of foreign agricultural investment characterised by critics as a 'global land grab' (Borras and Franco 2010, p. 2), highlighting the social impacts of changing land use and systems of production.

The research also makes several methodological contributions. First, despite important advances regarding the conceptualisation of complex causal processes, political science has been criticised for failing to adapt methodologies to reflect these theoretical developments (Hall 2003). The realist, *case-based approach* pursued in this thesis constitutes one attempt to align ontology and methodology in political analysis. Second, examination of nested case studies offers one means of linking analysis of processes at macro, meso and micro levels. Third, in drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data sources in the case-based analysis, the methodology pursues a mixed methods approach.

Finally, the thesis makes a number of empirical contributions to the literature on Ethiopia. First, case studies of smallholder agriculture have generated empirical data, which directly link

agricultural commercialisation, the use of improved technologies and food insecurity. Second, these case studies examine the interaction between the class-based land policy and ethnic federalism. While the conceptual links between the two policies have been briefly considered (Endrias Eshete 2003), very little research has examined the resolution of the tensions between them in practice. Third, the research is the first study to use empirical data to analyse the impact of new processes of foreign agricultural investment both at a macro level, regarding the role of investment in the economy, and at the micro level, in terms of the resulting patterns of agrarian transformation and the impacts on people living in the vicinity of new projects.

Structure of the thesis

This introduction begins part one, which sets out the study's rationale and outlines the approach pursued. Following the introduction, chapter two presents the analytical framework. This framework recognises the ideological and context-specific construction of social policy discourses in recursive interactions between societal groups, state organisations and international influences. These interactions occur in the concurrent processes of policy formulation—the elaboration of laws and strategies by senior policymakers—and policy implementation—the adaption of these pronouncements by low level officials.

Chapter three outlines the methodology employed. The chapter reviews existing approaches to social policy analysis, in particular dominant positivist, variable-based approaches, but also constructivist approaches, which have also made important contributions. However, the discussion concludes that neither of these is suitable for the present study. Instead, the research draws on recent philosophical and methodological work in sociology and political science, outlining a realist, *case-based approach*.

Part two analyses the process of policy formulation. Chapter four focuses on federal government strategies, identifying four social policy discourses. The first is the donor-supported *poverty reduction approach*, which prioritises market-led development and limits state social policy to targeted social protection and basic social services. In contrast, the Ethiopian government uses three additional discourses to justify greater state intervention to ensure an efficient allocation of factors of production, provide livelihood security for peasants and address inequality. These discourses constitute very different visions of development, while the contrasting framing of land tenure in terms of private property, state ownership and the property of ethnic groups, constitutes the key issue in Ethiopian social policy and the main focus of the thesis.

Building on this analysis, chapter five examines how these social policy discourses are reflected in policy documents and assesses the macro impact of government policies. The chapter concludes that, despite strong economic growth, the development strategy has failed to achieve key inter-sectoral linkages. Challenges in the smallholder sector, meanwhile, have prompted the government to take advantage of interest in farmland from foreign and domestic investors to promote large-scale, export-oriented agricultural investments.

Part three presents case studies of social policy implementation, focusing on the resolution of tensions between competing discourses and the impacts of policies on different types of people.

The first study, in chapter six, examines a grain-surplus site. The demonstrated potential for improved seeds to increase yields makes such sites vital to the government's developmental objectives. Nevertheless, the chapter highlights important failings, with use of improved inputs remaining low due to supply problems and limited incentives for farmers with small landholdings. Not only does this result in a limited surplus, but land shortages also mean that the land policy only guarantees a partial livelihood. The chapter also examines how land shortages resulting from migration and population growth have exacerbated ethnic tensions.

Chapter seven examines a food insecure site, highlighting the links between land and the PSNP. The case study demonstrates how severe land shortages, combined with government policies that limit migration, have contributed to declining agricultural production. The PSNP has been subsumed by the local system of production, enabling the survival of local people and the continuation of failing policies towards the smallholder sector, but offering little hope of transformative outcomes. In contrast to the clear distinction between indigenous inhabitants and newcomers in chapter six, the fluid understanding of ethnicity contributes to peaceful community relations.

Chapter eight examines three agricultural investments. The first is in a smallholder-dominated area, where the inability of communal irrigation projects to sustain high value crop production prompted the local government to lease communal land to domestic investors. The second study focuses on a large-scale foreign-owned project growing bio-fuel feed crops. The third case study examines the expansion of a state-owned sugar factory using outgrowers.

Part four synthesises the macro and micro-analysis. Chapter nine considers the implications of the case studies for the government's social policy and development strategies. The analysis highlights the concentration of investments in remote lowlands. In doing so, the chapter shows how the government draws on a 'marginal lands' narrative to justify these projects and exclude pastoralists from the protection of the land policy. Although the smallholder sector has been largely insulated from investment trends, in the context of urban stagnation and government policies that restrict migration population growth has resulted in widespread land shortages, eroding the social objectives of the land policy.

Chapter 10 examines the political economy of social policy. The chapter highlights the importance to the government of the smallholder sector, ensuring its protection despite ADLI's failings. Instead, the government has promoted agricultural investment in politically marginal lowlands. The analysis also illustrates government attempts to balance centralised policymaking and recognition of ethnic self-determination. Finally, aspects of the government's development strategy, notably state land ownership, enable state control over society, restrict individual and group rights, and, as such, constitute a constraint on political development.

2

A framework for analysing the political economy of social policy in an agrarian economy

This chapter has three main purposes. The first is to define the realm of *social* policy with respect to the roles it plays in society, its relationship to economic policy and the institutions involved in its provision. Second, the chapter reviews the literature on the determinants of social policy, primarily in advanced economies, and assesses the relevance of these theories to African contexts. Finally, the chapter sets out the analytical framework used to guide the thesis. This framework highlights the contestation between state organisations, societal groups and international interests in defining social policy discourses and the programmes they are used to justify.

Following this introduction, the next section sets out the approach taken in this thesis to the conceptualisation of social policy. The chapter then assesses the applicability of the main approaches to studying the politics of social policy and the African state to the present study. The following section then outlines the analytical framework used in this thesis, before examining the implications of the Ethiopian government's framing of land tenure as a social policy issue. The final section concludes.

Competing conceptions of social policy

Despite much debate, there is little in the way of consensus regarding the definition of social policy in advanced economies, and even less in developing countries. The contrasting definitions of social policy vary primarily with respect to: the roles social policy is expected to play and the instruments used to achieve social objectives; the relationship between economic and social policy; and the institutions responsible for social provision.

For example, regarding social policy in advanced economies, Deacon (2007) focuses on the role of the state in: regulating individual behaviour; guaranteeing social and economic rights; and redistributing income through taxation and social spending. In contrast, Esping-Andersen (1990) emphasises the roles of markets and the family, in addition to the state, in social provision. Esping-Andersen's approach builds on Polanyi (2001), assessing the extent to which welfare

regimes achieve 'de-commodification', reducing people's reliance on the market to 'make their living standards' (Esping-Andersen 1990, p. 3), and focusing on pensions, sickness benefit and unemployment insurance.

The study of social policy in developing countries has been criticised by those who highlight the western domination of the field, which, they argue, has resulted in a state-centric approach linked to the historical development of states and capitalism (Pérez Baltodano 1999, Moore 2000, Kabeer 2004). In particular, in developing countries well-functioning markets are frequently absent and states have 'rarely achieved the sovereignty or regulatory capacity of the advanced economies' (Kabeer and Cook 2000, p. 5). These concerns are valid, and there is certainly a need for caution in translating social policy concepts to developing country contexts. Nevertheless, states in developing countries do make important interventions based on 'social' objectives including employment, food security, education, health, redistribution and social cohesion.

Gough and Wood (2004a) use Esping-Andersen's work as a starting point, but translate his approach to developing country contexts. Like Esping-Andersen, they emphasise social provision by non-state actors, although they question the applicability of 'de-commodification' in developing countries where markets are often limited or absent. Instead, they consider the objective of social policy to be the mitigation of risk and promotion of 'livelihood security' (Gough and Wood 2004b, p. 5). Drawing on similar ideas, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) explicitly challenges the tendency for social policy to be restricted to the residual of economic policy, arguing instead that social policy 'involves overarching concerns with redistribution, production, reproduction and protection and works in tandem with economic policy in pursuit of national social and economic goals' (Mkandawire 2008).

Each of the definitions discussed above attempts to define the objectives, instruments and institutions that constitute the legitimate terrain of social policy. In contrast, another body of work highlights the socially constructed nature of social policy. For example, Marston argues that 'social policy is a contested public discourse involving political choices and administrative decisions about the appropriate division between public and private responsibility for our individual and collective wellbeing' (Marston 2004, p. 1). Consequently, although social policy can address a range of issues, there is no objectively legitimate issue that social policy *should* address. Rather, actors within state and society construct social policy discourses which identify aspects of social reality as problems, legitimating particular social policy interventions to address them while de-legitimizing others (Manning 1985, Kemeny 1992, Rochefort and Cobb 1993, Hastings 1998, Standing 2007).

A discursive approach to social policy

The approach taken in this thesis builds on insights regarding the socially constructed nature of social policy.² Social policy discourses define the boundaries of 'social' policy in specific national-historical contexts. A discourse in this sense is taken to be a 'set of ideas about the necessity and

² The following chapter outlines the ontological and epistemological approach of the thesis. However, it is worth noting here that acknowledgement of the socially constructed nature of 'the social' does not imply a whole-hearted embrace of relativism. Just because 'social facts' are socially constructed, does not mean that they are not 'real in the sense that they constitute interests and cause things to happen' (Schmidt 2008, p. 318).

appropriateness of reform', as well as the context within which these ideas are conveyed (Schmidt 2002, p. 169). These ideas may relate to: specific policies or policy solutions; general programmes; and philosophies that 'sit in the background as underlying assumptions' and which 'undergird the policies and programs with organizing ideas, values, and principles' (Schmidt 2008, p. 306). This context-specific construction delineates social policy in a number of areas: what roles social policy is expected to play; the institutions responsible; and the division between the economic and social.

The roles of social policy

Most social policy research acknowledges that social policy can play an important *protective* role. In advanced economies, social policy frequently aims to provide protection against contingency and lifecycle risks related to the labour market including unemployment, old age and ill health (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990, Huber and Stephens 2001). In developing countries, where the formal sector is limited, social protection instruments are often de-linked from the labour market and range from temporary safety nets and in-kind food aid to recent innovations like social pensions and cash transfers (UNRISD 2010, Niño-Zarazúa *et al.* 2011).

Nevertheless, social policy objectives are not necessarily limited to social protection. Historically, states have justified social interventions based on a number of other social objectives. For example, in both post-independence Africa and the East Asian developmental states, social policy tended to focus on services such as education, health, and water and sanitation for their *productive* role in the economy, constituting an investment in human capital (Gough 2004a, Kwon 2004, Adésinà 2007). Furthermore, social policies pursued by the Scandinavian social democratic countries explicitly aimed at the *redistribution* of resources based on a relational understanding of poverty (Kangas and Palme 2005b). In particular, a focus on equality underpinned universal rather than targeted social policy provision (Korpi and Palme 1988). Meanwhile, a growing literature also highlights the role of social policy in *social reproduction*. Gendered analyses of social reproduction demonstrate that women bear a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work and highlight the importance of social policies such as care services, child benefits, and maternity and paternity leave (Kabeer 2004, Razavi 2007).

Just as social policy roles vary, many types of policies may be employed to social ends in addition to those normally considered under the umbrella of social policy. This is particularly so in developing countries where the relevance of welfare state policies is contestable, given the limited size of the formal economy, and their expense is a major constraint. One important example is land reform, which has been employed in many countries to explicitly social ends (Cook 2002, Chang 2004, Gough 2004b). In an agrarian society, land is the main productive resource and the redistribution of land from landed elites to smallholders or measures to protect smallholders from displacement have enormous implications for equality and security.

Institutions and the distinction between social and economic policy

By entertaining the possibility that redistribution and production be framed as social rather than economic issues, we confront the questionable distinction between social and economic policy, and related discussions regarding the institutional provision of those policies. The approach taken here is that the social and economic spheres are fundamentally indivisible (Midgley 1995, Polanyi

2001, Elson 2004, Kabeer 2004) and that any attempt to separate social and economic policy is socially constructed and related to broader ideological debates. Closely linked to this delineation of social and economic policy is the construction of legitimate institutional responsibility for social provision between the institutions of the state, market, community and family (Esping-Andersen 1990, Gough and Wood 2004a). Although the main focus of this thesis is on state social policy, the legitimate role for the state is defined in relation to these other institutions.

At one extreme, neo-liberalism focuses on the free functioning of markets, believed to produce beneficial welfare outcomes for all, with state activity—including social policy—considered market-distorting. Consequently, neo-liberalism would limit state social policy to the provision of public goods, which are undersupplied by the market—such as education, and perhaps temporary safety nets for the poorest. The neo-liberal discourse on social policy therefore pursues a ‘leader/follower’ model, with macroeconomic policy taking priority and social policy consisting of residual activities (Mkandawire 2004a, p. 9).

At another extreme, economic policy is considered a subset of social policy. From this viewpoint, economic policy is an instrument to pursue social objectives and the accumulation of wealth is of value primarily as a function of the social outcomes that it generates. Closer to this extreme, the social development approach stresses the integrated nature of economic and social policy (Midgley 1995, de Haan 2007) and highlights the roles state social policy can play in protection, redistribution, reproduction and production (Mkandawire 2004a).

Finally, community organisations and family can take a leading role in social provision. This may be part of a neo-liberal agenda, with family and voluntary organisations seen by many donor agencies as preferable to state provision (Edwards and Hulme 1996). In addition, where state capacity is limited in remote areas, the state may be largely absent and therefore unable to establish market institutions or to play a role in social provision (Migdal 1988), leaving community organisations and family as the main providers.

Clearly there are a range of possible positions in addition to these extremes. Nonetheless, I argue that the division between social and economic policy and the relative roles of state, market and society in the provision of social policy are context-specific and socially constructed, reflecting the political and ideological commitments of the actors in state and society. As such, social policy constitutes a key aspect of state-society relations (Stephens 2007, Hickey 2011).

Social policy, politics and the state

To analyse the political economy of social policy, I draw on the literatures on the determinants of welfare state development and the African state. These have virtually no overlap, perhaps unsurprisingly given the absence of welfare states—in which the state takes primary responsibility for the welfare of its citizens—in Africa (Bevan 2004).

Theories of social policy development

As a starting point, I review a number of influential theories regarding the determinants of social policy development, and their relevance to African contexts. They vary based on the extent to

which they see the source of social change originating from the economy—the logic of industrialism and the influence of neo-liberal globalisation; from the state—institutionalist approaches; or from society—the power resources approach and the influence of ethnic divisions (Huber and Stephens 2001, Amenta 2003). These theoretical approaches emerged primarily to explain differences between social policies in advanced economies and, as such, caution is required when considering their relevance to contemporary Ethiopia.

The *logic of industrialism* has been used to explain the emergence of welfare states, attributing social policy expansion to structural changes that produced an urban workforce with new sources of insecurity such as unemployment, and economic growth, which provided revenue to fund social policies (Wilensky 1975, Pampel and Williamson 1992, Polanyi 2001). Similar arguments have been advanced to explain social policy expansion in East Asia following the Asian financial crisis (Kwon 2004, de Haan 2010). Nevertheless, industrialism provides no explanation for the roles that social policy does actually play in developing countries and neglects the possibility that social policy can help developing countries to ‘catch up’ with advanced economies (Mkandawire 2004a, p. 22, Gerschenkron 1962).

In recent years, social policy studies in developed (Esping-Andersen 1990, Pierson 1994) and developing countries (Gough and Wood 2004a) have been dominated by *institutionalism* and, in particular, historical institutionalism. The institutionalist literature on social policy has made many important contributions relevant to this study, yet suffers from weaknesses. Institutionalism highlights the role of state institutions in policy reform (Evans *et al.* 1985). For example, it is harder for a government to expand social provision when political power is dispersed and fragmented institutions provide numerous veto points for opponents of reform. These hypotheses have been used to explain the limited welfare provision in the US compared to Europe (Skocpol 1992) and the historical absence of redistributive social policy in Brazil (Weyland 1996). Institutionalists have also highlighted path dependence in institutional responsibility for social provision (Esping-Andersen 1990, Davis 2004). Path dependence occurs when the institution that mobilises first blocks organisation by others or when social policies create political constituencies which resist reform (Skocpol 1992, Pierson 1994). Despite making important insights regarding state structure and its links to society, historical institutionalism struggles to explain changes at critical junctures, frequently resorting to macro-social or ideational variables to explain institutional change (Cammack 1992, Blyth 1997, Boone 2003, Schmidt 2008). Given that this thesis seeks to analyse the political economy of social policy choices, rather than develop new classifications of regime types, as has become a fixation of some institutionalists working on social policy (Castles and Mitchell 1992, Abrahamson 1999, Arts and Gelissen 2002, Saint-Arnaud and Bernard 2003), there is a need to look beyond institutionalism.

The third body of work is the *power resources approach* which focuses on class struggle to explain social policy expansion, highlighting the importance of political mobilisation of the working class through leftist parties and unions in Scandinavian social democracies (Korpi 1978, Stephens 1979). To be of relevance to developing countries, however, this approach requires adaptation. First, many African economies are predominately agricultural with a small urban working class. Consequently, unions are often of marginal importance or represent narrow interests (Tendler 2004, Seekings and Nattrass 2005) and agricultural workers face collective action problems. In addition, many developing countries lack democratic electoral systems and even where electoral

processes are relatively 'free and fair', political parties are often based on personalities and ethnic allegiance rather than ideology and issues (Cammack *et al.* 2007). Consequently, though class is analytically useful for understanding the politics of social policy in developing countries (Hickey 2010), a focus on the representation of class interests through unions and parties may be less valuable.

Several researchers have also highlighted the impact of *ethnic divisions* on social policy reform. Particularly important is the interaction between ethnicity and class interests, with research demonstrating that ethnic heterogeneity has undermined the class solidarity required for the development of comprehensive tax-financed social policy both in the United States (Alesina *et al.* 2001) and in Sweden (Eger 2010). These findings are potentially relevant to Africa, where most countries are ethnically heterogeneous.

A final body of research highlights the impact of *neo-liberal globalisation* on social policy. Neo-liberal globalisation is a political project which has resulted in the re-regulation³ of financial markets and international trade in the interests of international capital mobility since the late 1970s (Bernstein 2010, Standing 2010). These reforms have promoted labour market flexibility, contributing to class fragmentation which has undermined class solidarity, and convergence upon minimal, residual forms of social policy (Standing 2004, 2010, 2011, Bryceson 2010).⁴ Although much of this research has focused on the impact of globalisation on the crisis of the welfare state, it has been argued that the same forces influence state provision in developing countries (ILO 2004, Standing 2010). In particular, neo-liberal reforms have removed universalistic social policies within the agricultural sector—such as food subsidies and price stabilisation—which were integrated with economic policy to provide protection to smallholders and the urban poor (Bernstein 1990, Gibbon 1992, Bryceson and Jamal 1997).

In developing countries, foreign donors, including the International Finance Institutions (IFI) and many bilateral donors, have been among the principal actors promoting neo-liberal reforms. Of particular importance were the structural adjustment reforms imposed through policy conditionality in the 1980s and early 1990s (Olukoshi 1998, Mkandawire and Soludo 1999). Despite donor claims to support national policy ownership through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, recent research highlights the enduring influence of multinational and bilateral donors over policy processes in many African countries (Whitfield 2009).

Conceptualising the African state

The literature on the African state has frequently drawn on comparisons with European states, or at least an idealised image of them, to highlight the relative weakness of states in Africa, in particular their inability to exert full territorial control and frequent failure to implement reforms. The conceptualisation of European states is dominated by Max Weber's well-known definition: 'A

³ Frequently described as de-regulation in the literature, Standing (2010) demonstrates the inaccuracy of this label since neo-liberal reforms have actually involved increased regulation in favour of capital.

⁴ Critics of this hypothesis contend that increased vulnerability resulting from globalisation provides the motivation for states to increase social protection expenditure (Brown and Hunter 1999). However, this focus on expenditure ignores changes in the types of social policy. Class fragmentation has undermined support for social policy based on solidarity, switching to residual social policies which address economic shocks and focus on the poor (ILO 2004, Standing 2010).

state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory' (Gerth and Mills 2003, p. 82). Migdal (2001), however, highlights that Weber's work was actually intended as a definition of an ideal type, rather than a definition of real states, for which it has frequently been used. Consequently, a considerable literature overestimates states' capacities by giving them 'an ontological status that has lifted them apart from the rest of society' (Migdal 2001, p. 123).

Many researchers emphasise an important difference between the origins of European and African states. European states formed and were consolidated in close proximity to neighbouring powers, with elites mobilising people and resources for repeated conflicts to defend and expand their territory (Tilly 1992). The result is that most European states are relatively ethnically homogeneous and have long asserted full control over their 'hinterland' (Herbst 2000, p. 14, Tilly 1992). In contrast, the borders of most contemporary African states are based on the dividing lines between European colonial administrations, which ignored existing societies and economies (Clapham 2001, Bevan 2004). Consequently, post-colonial governments, most of which have maintained colonial borders (Clapham 2001), have faced considerable challenges in terms of nation building in multi-ethnic societies and exerting territorial control within the state's borders. In many cases, post-colonial governments, like their colonial predecessors, have resorted to indirect rule, forced to work through chiefs who enjoy some legitimacy in their communities (Mamdani 1996), or have existing alongside non-state structures of authority (Reno 1999, p. 2, 2000).⁵

Furthermore, the literature on neo-patrimonialism has highlighted how poorly African states compare to Weber's ideal type bureaucracy (Bratton and Van der Walle 1997, Cammack *et al.* 2007). In contrast to Weber's state, which is based on the separation of public and private spheres, reliance on rational-legal institutions and the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence, African states are frequently written off as neo-patrimonial (Clapham 1982, Bayart 1993, Bratton and van der Walle 1997, Chabal and Daloz 1999, van der Walle 2001, Cammack *et al.* 2007). Neo-patrimonialism is characterised by an overlap between public and private spheres, a hybrid system, which combines patrimonialism with rational-legal institutions, and competing sources of power that question the state's legitimacy. The result is that African states are plagued by corruption, while political elites are unable to govern effectively and implement policy reforms.

Some authors writing on neo-patrimonialism acknowledge that such practices exist to some extent within states throughout the world (Bratton and Van der Walle 1997). Nevertheless, they argue that neo-patrimonial logic constitutes the 'core feature' of African states (Bratton and Van der Walle 1997, p. 62). However, while neo-patrimonialism undoubtedly captures some of the reality of African states, critics have questioned the analytic usefulness of the concept (Eriksen 2001, Mkandawire 2002, Therkildsen 2005). In particular, by comparing states to Weber's unrealistic ideal type, there is a danger of focusing on state deficiencies and ignoring the powers that states do possess. Just as there is a danger of 'overridealizing its [the state's] ability to turn rhetoric into effective policy', there is also the possibility of 'dismissing it as a grab-bag of everyman-out-for-himself, corrupt officials' (Migdal 2001, pp. 22–23).

⁵ Herbst (2000) argues that African states prior, during and subsequent to the colonial era are united in the challenges of attempting to maintain political control over sparsely populated hinterlands.

In contrast to the Weberian model, Migdal's (1988, 1994, 2001) *State-in-Society* approach is more suited to the call for African states to be 'seen in their own terms as the product of their own societies, not merely failed attempts to reproduce a model of government from elsewhere' (Clapham 1994, p. 434). Migdal (2001) argues that the state is not a unitary actor but a collection of separate organisations, each with its own priorities and constraints, which are embedded in society and in constant competition. State actors are embedded in society in the sense that in all states, bureaucrats bring their private allegiances with them into public office. The execution of their duties takes place in the context of competing logics—the rational-legal logic of the state and the informal rules and expectations that come from membership in an ethnic group, clan, family, business or club.

This discussion regarding the nature of the state has important implications for policy research. Many theories of the policymaking process focus almost exclusively on policy formulation by senior officials (e.g. Sabatier 1999), as indeed does the majority of the literature on the determinants of social policy, discussed in the previous section. In doing so, these theories assume (usually implicitly) the existence of a unitary state in which lower levels of the administration have the capacity and independence from society required to drive through reforms unaltered. While this assumption is highly questionable in any part of the world (Lipsky 1980, Grindle and Thomas 1991, Migdal 2001), in the light of the extensive literature detailing the challenges faced by African states, it is implausible. Instead, the framework that follows combines a conceptualisation of the policymaking process that recognises both the capacities and deficiencies of the state.

The political economy of social policy: A conceptual framework

The analytic approach taken in this thesis builds on Huber and Stephens' *power constellations approach* (Huber and Stephens 2001, 2012), which integrates insights from the literature on the determinants of social policy, discussed above. Huber and Stephens (2001) identify three influential 'power constellations': societal cleavages along class and ethnic lines; the state and its links to society; and international influences. However, Huber and Stephens, like most researchers examining the politics of social policy, focus almost exclusively on the formulation of strategies and laws at high levels of government. They pay little attention to the capacity of state organisations to implement reforms, the links between local state institutions and society, and the effect on policy implementation. Consequently, the framework also integrates insights from Migdal's (2001) *State-in-Society* approach to the study of the state and policymaking. Drawing on the power constellations and state-in-society approaches, this framework focuses on the interactions between constellations of power and their influence over policy at each level of Migdal's (2001) anthropology of the state.

At the macro level, the central government formulates strategy documents and laws within a legitimating social policy discourse in the context of pressures from domestic society and the international arena. Local government officials then implement these policies at the micro level—sometimes true to the original formulation, though frequently substantially adapted—in the context of competing policy discourses promoted by local society and international influences. It

is this micro level implementation that constitutes social policy for real people, rather than senior officials' sweeping pronouncements, which may only have limited impact in practice. For analytical purposes, I therefore make a distinction between the processes of policy formulation—the elaboration of strategies and laws within a legitimating discourse at high levels of government—and implementation—the translation of these pronouncements into policy practice. At the micro level, policy implementation transforms not only policy but also community structures and systems of production, providing the context within which future policy is formulated (Weir *et al.* 1988, Pierson and Skocpol 2002, Pierson 2004, Hickey 2008b). The links between social policy and politics are therefore recursive.

It should be noted at this point that by linking the discursive approach to social policy, outlined above, to a political economy analysis, the framework raises the longstanding and intractable question regarding the relative importance of interests and ideas in explaining policy change. The approach taken in this thesis is that social actors are active in the formulation of ideas and invoke discourses to frame and justify their preferred policy strategies. In doing so, social actors may use policy frames as a form of argumentation (Gasper 1996), to justify the focus on particular issues and the exclusion of others, and the adoption of preferred policies (Wade 1996, 2002). They may also invoke ideas or policy frames to appeal for the support of important political constituencies. In this sense, ideas can 'be seen as power resources used by self-interested actors or as weapons in political struggles that help agents achieve their ends' (Blyth 2003, p. 702). Indeed, this includes the possibility that politicians may pursue policies for reasons other than those publicly used to justify them (Boone 2003), emphasising the importance of studying not only discourse but also policy practice in order to examine the social, economic and political impacts of a policy and identify those that stand to benefit.

While focusing on the use of discourse by social actors as a means of pursuing their interests, I acknowledge the important contributions of constructivist researchers who show that ideas are not just tools to be used by powerful actors, but that ideas can be extremely influential in shaping actors' interests. In this view, interests are 'social constructs that are open to redefinition through ideological contestation' (Blyth 2002, p. 271). Or, to put it another way, 'ideas transform perceptions of interest, shaping actors' self understanding of their own interest' (Sikkink 1991, p. 243). Nevertheless, this thesis focuses primarily on the interests that influence policy change, both in acknowledgement of the methodological challenge of demonstrating causality in ideational research (Hall 1997, Hay 2004) and as a result of the empirical focus of the study, which considers changing social structures during the process of structural transformation and their implications for social policy and state-society relations. Consequently, the analysis pays particular attention to the competing discourses actors use to justify what constitute legitimate social policy issues, what types of policies are considered appropriate to address them and what role the state should play in comparison to market and society.

The remainder of this section outlines in greater detail the thesis' conceptual understanding of the processes of policy formulation and implementation, and how these relate to the thesis' focus on the links between social policy and state-society relations. Chapter three specifies the methodology pursued to inform this framework and the methodological challenges that result.

Policy formulation

Part two of the thesis addresses the first research question: *how are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?* The process of policy formulation involves contestation within and between state organisations, societal groups and international interests over the content of the policy documents, laws and statements that constitute the end point of the process.

The commanding heights and central agency offices of the state

Migdal (2001) distinguishes between different types of state organisation and their role in the policy process. Distinctions can be made between: *the commanding heights*—the executive; *the central agency offices*—central government ministries; *the dispersed field offices*—district and regional bureaux; and *the trenches*—the local government officials who put policy into practice. It is the highest levels—the commanding heights and central agency offices—that formulate the strategies and laws that constitute social policy within a legitimating discourse.

The commanding heights comprise the executive leadership responsible for the overall direction of government policy. This leadership weighs up competing demands for resources from line ministries, the balance of interests deriving from cleavages in domestic society and pressures from the international arena. The central agency offices, meanwhile, comprise the government ministries responsible for formulating sectoral strategies and translating government discourse into policy details. These agencies compete with other ministries for scarce resources, monitor the performance of lower levels of the state apparatus and report to the senior leadership. They are also exposed to pressure directly from interest groups in society and, potentially, pressure from foreign donors.

The process of policy formulation is based on policymakers' interpretation of the big issues, the national interest, and international and national constraints. Key factors in decision making are likely to include the need to retain political control and to maximise state revenues in order to pursue preferred policy initiatives (Levi 1992, Joireman 2000). While domestic society and international influences present structural constraints on policymakers, there remains a degree of policy space to pursue preferred objectives (Grindle and Thomas 1991). Indeed, access to foreign aid and taxes on international trade provides developing country states with considerable power over poorly resourced groups in society, potentially diminishing the state's reliance on domestic revenue mobilisation and insulating policymakers from societal interests (Bayart 1993, Bräutigam *et al.* 2008, Hujo and McClanahan 2009).

Societal interests

Policymakers at the highest levels of government are influenced by the relative power of groups in society with cleavages based on class, ethnicity and gender assuming particular importance. Interest groups can mobilise to influence policy directly through political parties, business organisations, unions or social movements. Alternatively, and perhaps more importantly given democratic failings in many developing countries, states may respond to policy elites' perception of the relative strength of social structures and political alliances (Grindle and Thomas 1991, p.

38). Resulting state actions may favour politically important groups or prevent collective action of others (Boone 2003).

Class has both objective and subjective dimensions, each of which has analytical uses. Economic classes are objective categories based on skills, access to market opportunities and raw materials, in addition to the relationship to the means of production (Standing 2010). Nonetheless, class interests cannot be 'read off' from economic categories (Huber and Stephens 2001, p. 24). Rather political classes are relational and subjective. '[C]lass happens when some men [and women], as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men [and women] whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs' (Thompson 1968, pp. 8–9). It is a collective acknowledgement of shared interests that ascribes meaning to an economic relationship and which can provide the basis for political organisation.

Drawing on the power resources approach, class coalitions play important roles in framing social policy debates and influencing reform (Korpi 1978). For example, coalitions between disadvantaged classes can frame inequality as a social problem, constituting a powerful voice demanding state action in the form of redistributive social policies (Esping-Andersen 1990, Huber and Stephens 2001, Kangas and Palme 2005b). In contrast, class fragmentation and inequality undermine solidarity, allowing powerful actors to frame the poor as the object of state social intervention, frequently leading to a focus on targeted, conditional social policies (Mkandawire 2005, Standing 2010).

The debate on ethnicity, meanwhile, is polarised between *primordialists* and *instrumentalists*. For primordialists, ethnicity is a naturally occurring phenomenon, based on objectively identifiable characteristics that mark an ethnic group, such as race, language and religion (Shils 1957, Geertz 1963). Ethnicity is thus frequently a cause for action. In contrast, instrumentalists dispute that ethnicity is objective and, rather than being a cause for action, ethnicity is a resource used to promote action (Bates 1973, Brass 1985, Bayart 1993, Posner 2004). While most contemporary researchers attempt to find a middle ground between these extremes, they 'recurrently fall back on some variant of these simple positions' (Fardon 1996, p. 17). I draw heavily on Vaughan's (2003) work, which attempts to transcend this divide. Ethnic membership is a social status based on acceptance by the rest of the group as a member. Markers of ethnicity, meanwhile, are based on convention and while markers may or may not be based on real world features, their significance is socially constructed (Barth 1970). Social construction does not, however, mean that ethnicity is unimportant or fluid—an individual's experience of this constructed identity may be absolute just as the individual's 'own contribution to the ongoing collective creation and recreation' may seem 'infinitesimally small' (Vaughan 2003, p. 57, see also Bates 2006, Brown and Langer 2008). Though the primordialist assertion that there is an objective core to ethnicity is rejected, as a social status, ethnicity can cause or influence action, as argued by primordialists (Vaughan 2003). Nonetheless, the socially constructed nature of ethnicity does allow for individual influence in the process of ethnicisation, potentially to a considerable degree, thereby supporting the instrumentalist assertion that ethnicity can be used by individuals for particular ends. The result is therefore a 'recursive relationship' between ethnicity and interest (Vaughan 2003, p. 78).

The interaction between ethnicity and class is of vital importance to the political economy of social policy, given the impact of ethnicity on the coherence of political movements demanding social interventions. The political importance of ethnicity arises from competing interpretations of history and politics particularly in relation to the identification of indigenous groups versus newcomers, oppression by one ethnic group of another and inclusion/exclusion from political power. Ethnic discourses may manifest themselves in ethnic-based parties or movements, and potentially the domination of politics by ethnic interests, resulting in calls for greater autonomy for ethnic regions, redistribution of resources between groups or affirmative action policies to correct for past inequality (Stewart *et al.* 2010).

International influences

States are immersed in the international arena, which exerts influence over policy through interactions with other states, international organisations and international business (Room 2004). The development assistance provided by multilateral and bilateral donors constitutes a substantial proportion of the revenues of many developing country states. This financial support can give foreign donors considerable influence over policy formulation through: direct engagement with senior policymakers within the executive and ministries, promoting particular social policy discourses and applying policy conditionality; ring-fencing aid to focus spending on donor priority sectors; process conditionality, which makes aid conditional on the participation and consultation of disadvantaged groups; and the provision of technical assistance, which places donor representatives inside government departments (Lavers 2009). Government policymakers balance donor pressure against their own priorities and domestic interests. Frequently, aid buys donors considerable influence, while in other cases recipient government negotiating strategies and the importance of domestic politics are such that they have limited power (Whitfield 2009).

Government policy is formulated in the context of the global economy, international trade agreements and economic opportunities. Foreign competition can influence decision making, leading to government initiatives which protect important domestic interests from competition from cheap foreign imports, while governments may provide incentives to foreign businesses, including favourable legislation that limits social provision based on the need to attract foreign investment. In certain cases large multinational companies, whose revenues can be greater than the GDP of entire developing countries, can exert great power over senior policymakers, influencing policy formulation and ensuring the adoption of preferred policies.

International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), like NGOs in general, have assumed increased importance in recent decades. Donor agencies have frequently promoted NGOs based on the neo-liberal assumption that they are more efficient than the state in service delivery and represent the interests of the poor (Edwards and Hulme 1996). Some donors have directed funding through NGOs at the expense of developing country states, while governments formulating PRSPs have been required by process conditionality to consult NGOs as representatives of the poor (Molenaers 2008). Furthermore, international NGOs have been extremely influential in placing issues on the agenda of the global development industry, notably during the Jubilee 2000 debt cancellation campaign.

Summary

The policy formulation process therefore involves interaction and contestation between actors in the state, society and the international sphere regarding the framing of social issues within social policy discourses and the details of the resulting policy initiatives. Of particular importance are the relations between different state organisations and competition over scarce resources; the importance of societal cleavages along class, ethnic and gender lines; and the impact of the global economy and Ethiopia's foreign donors.

Policy implementation

Part three of the thesis focuses on the policy implementation process and addresses the second research question: *how are these social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?* Policy implementation involves contestation between state organisations, societal interests and international influences regarding the key decisions that transform policy from a statement of intent at the commanding heights to a set of actions that affect people's lives.

The field offices and the trenches of the state

While policy formulation has attracted most academic attention, what matter to individuals and households are the social outcomes that result from implementation (Harriss 1988). Policy pronouncements at high levels of government are turned into practice at the dispersed field offices and in the trenches (Migdal 2001). The dispersed field offices are responsible for organising the implementation of a policy with a particular territory, for example, making decisions regarding which districts qualify for a social assistance programme or the location of a new health centre. Officials at this level report to superiors who are often far away in central agency offices and, as a result, supervision may be weak (Migdal 2001). Given local variation, these officials may confront a very different set of local interests compared to that at the national level. The trenches, meanwhile, are the territory of Lipsky's (1980) 'street level bureaucrats' and it is here that local government officials make vital decisions regarding application of social policies to complex local reality. These officials are responsible for the execution of state policy in the face of potentially strong opposition from local society. Indeed, they directly confront the intended targets and beneficiaries of state policy, as well as reporting to superiors in the dispersed field offices to whom they are responsible.

The decisions of these local government officials influence access to resources and patterns of risk, inequality and opportunity for individuals and groups in society. While these decisions are made in the context of social policy discourses promoted at the commanding heights of the state, decision making is embedded in local politics, with local state organisations competing for dominance with social forces who promote their own competing discourses and attempt to exploit local administrators' links to society. Though international actors usually exert more influence over policy formulation than implementation, international influences remain relevant at the local level.

Societal interests

Systems of production and the processes that transform them are the sources of risk and opportunity, which political actors construct into the legitimate terrain for social policy. Furthermore, the impacts of state social policy interventions are differentiated according to class, which derives from the system of production, and its intersection with age, ethnicity and gender. These cleavages commonly provide sources of political mobilisation and influence over the implementation of policy at the local level. Drawing on the agrarian studies literature, key determinants of the system of production are the system of land tenure, the nature of relations between classes and the state, and the use of technology in production (Moore, Jr. 1967, Boone 2003, Bernstein 2010).

Household and individual differentiation is based on access to the agricultural inputs required for the particular system of production and the intersection of class with the position in the lifecycle of the household, ethnicity and gender (Razavi 2003). Crouch and de Janvry's (1980) framework analyses the social context of production, highlighting the importance of labour relations and the ownership of agricultural inputs. In the Ethiopian context, however, it is necessary to move beyond their distinction between peasant and capitalist production. Within the non-capitalist sector, this framework distinguishes between settled smallholders, sharecroppers and landless households, and those involved in shifting agriculture and agro-pastoralism. Within the capitalist sector, the thesis distinguishes between plantations directly managed by investors and farmed using wage labour, and different types of outgrower schemes. In outgrower schemes, investors contract smallholders to grow specific crops and to sell exclusively to the investor, usually at a pre-agreed price. Capitalist farmers often supply outgrowers with technology and expertise to aid production (Little and Watts 1994).

As at the macro level, ethnicity can be an important locus for the organisation of local interests, for example through customary political organisations, or mobilisation by religious leaders or respected elders. Discourses related to notions of indigeneity and oppression can motivate demands for differential treatment, while in the context of multiple linguistic groups, the language of local government can attain political significance. Consequently, ethnicity can be both a key factor binding community structures together and legitimising hierarchical social structures that concentrate political power, or a boundary that divides society and class interests.

International influences

In many instances, the direct influence of international actors over policy implementation is weaker than that over formulation. In particular, donor agencies usually have less influence at this level given their capacity constraints in monitoring local activities. Nevertheless, international influence is by no means absent. Local economies are, to varying degrees, integrated into global markets that influence prices and expose producers to risks. Meanwhile, where foreign businesses are active, they can exert great influence over local government decision making if they are in a dominant position in the local economy and constitute the main provider of employment. Foreign investment can also transform existing production with important implications for the social relations of production, and the risks and opportunities for individuals

and households. Finally, many international NGOs are active within villages engaged in activities such as social provision, agricultural development and civic education.

Summary

Local government officials implement social policy, sometimes true to the original policy formulation, though frequently substantially altered. These officials' decisions are influenced by the policy pronouncements arising during policy formulation but also by local state organisations, local societal interests and international interests who promote competing discourses on social policy. The agricultural system of production is the source of class divisions, which intersect with age, gender and ethnicity and constitute the basis for mobilisation of societal interests, as well as determining the differential impacts of state social policies.

Social policy and state-society relations

The final research question, addressed in part four of the thesis, asks: *what are the implications of this social policy strategy for state-society relations?* The preceding discussion suggests links between social policy and state-society relations at both macro and micro levels regarding: the links between social policy discourses and political ideology; the nature of social policies and the constraints they place on individual and group rights; and the impact of social policy on systems of production, and relations of dependency and cooperation.

Social policy discourses are closely related to political interests (Hastings 1998) and underlying political philosophies regarding the role of the state and its relationship with society (Hickey 2011). In certain cases, social policy can form part of a social contract between a state and its citizens, serving as a means of legitimising state authority (Hickey 2011). For example, the expansion of the welfare state was an important part of class compromise and democratic stabilisation across Europe following the Second World War (Kangas and Palme 2005b, Stephens 2007). However, this is by no means always the case. Just as frequently, states have used social policies as a means of expanding the reach of the state, nullifying political threats and controlling their populations. For example, a central concern of the social insurance system introduced under authoritarian rule by Bismarck in nineteenth century Germany was to prevent union militancy (Room 2004, Gough 2008), while in England the 1601 Elizabethan Poor Law was used to undermine feudal barons and expand control of the central state (Room 2004). In East Asia, meanwhile, a key motivation of land reform in Korea and Taiwan following the Second World War was to nullify the threat of socialism.

Closely related to the political philosophies in which they are embedded, social policies vary regarding their prioritisation of individual and group rights. For example, at one extreme, a basic income grant, which provides universal, unconditional support can promote freedom by enhancing individuals' capacity to make decisions from a position of economic security (Standing 2010). In contrast, many social interventions—including mandatory social insurance contributions, school attendance or food-for-work programmes—are coercive to some degree, since they restrict individual freedoms in the supposed best interests of the recipient. However, the degree of coercion considered acceptable is closely related to the political context in which policy is formulated and the nature of state-society relations. For example, while state provision of education is widely accepted as legitimate (except by some extreme libertarians), forced

migration is undeniably social in nature yet would not be acceptable in liberal democracies due to the restrictions it places on individual freedoms.

Finally, given that ‘the political authority of government is conditioned by micro-level political economies of property relations, personal dependency, and social control’ (Boone 2003, p. 12), the potential for state social policy to transform social relations of production and class structures has important implications for the balance of political power (Moore, Jr. 1967, Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992). A key part of the micro-level analysis therefore considers the role of the state and the degree of cooperation, dependency and coercion between classes in the organisation of production (Boone 2003). Where economic relations derive from dependency and coercion, there is greater potential for economic power to translate into political influence than is the case where the relationship is based on a ‘free’ choice through a functioning market. On the whole, political influence occurs when economic power overlaps with strong communal structure that is required for political engagement with the state (Moore, Jr. 1967, Scott 1976, Boone 2003).

Land, social policy and politics

A key argument of this thesis, elaborated in chapter four, is that land is a central feature of state social policy and state-society relations in Ethiopia. This final section begins to explore the theoretical implications of competing discourses on land, considering: first, the framing of land as a social or economic issue; and second, the implications of competing discourses on land for state-society relations.

Competing discourses on land

The Ethiopian government defines *state land ownership* as a central part of its social policy strategy. The government argues that state land ownership and the distribution of usufruct rights to smallholders provides a form of social protection to farmers who might otherwise be forced into distress sales of their land whenever they face economic shocks. Furthermore, by restricting land transfers, state ownership prevents class differentiation and contributes to egalitarian economic growth. While the government highlights the importance of state land ownership, as with other ‘social’ policies, there are multiple conceptions regarding institutional responsibility for land tenure. In contrast, *neo-liberalism* regards the commodification of land as one of the pre-requisites of a market economy (Bernstein 2010). According to this perspective, land is a matter of economic, not social, policy. Clearly defined private and transferable property rights promote economic efficiency by (North 1981, Joireman 2000):

- i. Facilitating migration, allowing landowners to sell and move to areas where there are better economic opportunities;
- ii. Providing the tenure security required to invest in production, leading to increased productivity;
- iii. Enabling landowners to borrow against their land to access credit, providing greater resources for investment (see also De Soto 2001); and
- iv. Providing a legal basis for land transfers, reducing transaction costs and encouraging efficient farmers to accumulate.

In contrast, *communal tenure* places land management in the hands of the community to administer land in the collective interest (Dessalegn Rahmato 1994, Platteau 2005, Mamo Hebo 2006). This approach prevents encroachment by outsiders—the state, migrants or business—on customary land management practices (Boone 2007). Consequently, land tenure is not considered to be the terrain of either the state or the market, but the responsibility of the community. As tenure would be specific to local circumstances and customs, there is no one communal system but the principle would require restrictions on land sales to prevent transfers to outsiders.

Land and state-society relations

In addition to the socioeconomic implications of competing discourses on land, different forms of tenure—state ownership, communal ownership and private property—have very different implications for state-society relations (Boone 2007). Consequently, competition between state organisations and groups in society to dominate social policy discourse and transform land tenure has important implications for political development.

State ownership requires landholders to relinquish a degree of control (or be forced to do so) over key aspects of their livelihood in return for state protection from market forces. In this way, central government is directly involved in the political management of land (Boone 2007). Such an approach, alongside democratic decentralisation, could increase the legitimacy of land management. However, state ownership certainly has the potential to ‘expand the arbitrary authority of the central state’ (Boone 2007, p. 583) and may therefore be more compatible with authoritarianism.

Communal ownership requires a communal authority to administer property rights. This body may be a customary authority or a new organisation, but in order to achieve freedom from state intrusion, it could not be local government. Communal ownership therefore signifies the limits of state territorial authority or involves the devolution of authority from governmental to communal organisations, with state access to its citizens mediated through local elites, resembling indirect rule (Boone 2007). Such an approach inevitably raises questions regarding the accountability of the new authority to the community, the balance of power between local government and the land authority, and how to define community membership. Regarding this last point, communal tenure can make ethnicity a political classification that determines access to resources (see Mamdani 1996), leading to diversity in citizenship rights between indigenous residents and newcomers (Boone 2007).

Finally, *private property* removes political control of land from the state, with the exception of the enforcement of the rule of law, and places control of land access in the market place. According to Boone (2007), private property is likely to enhance individual autonomy with respect to the community, eroding association based on primordial ties such as ethnicity and expanding voluntary association. This would also mean the unification of citizenship rights across a country and it is often argued, therefore, that there is an elective affinity between capitalist private property rights and liberal democracy (Moore, Jr. 1967).

Conclusions

This chapter has laid out the conceptual approach of this thesis. It began by considering the realm of the social, rejecting the selection of a set of policies common in developed countries, but recognising that the classification of policies as social or otherwise is socially constructed in specific national-historical contexts. This social construction defines the roles that social policy is expected to play, the relationship between economic and social policy, and the legitimate institutional provision of those policies. In an agrarian society, issues are identified as problems requiring social policy interventions based on the agrarian system of production, rather than the capitalist, formal economy common to welfare states.

The discussion also emphasised the recursive links between social policy and politics. The construction of social policy discourses and choices regarding social policies concern the distribution of resources in society and reflect the balance of political interests. Furthermore, social policy can be used to enhance the political control of the state and to influence political mobilisation in society. In particular, social policy can transform or reinforce interests, providing the context within which new social policy is formulated.

This thesis conceptualises policymaking as concurrent processes of formulation by senior policymakers and implementation by local administrators. Within each of these processes, social policy and the discourses employed to justify policy choices are adapted by repeated interactions between interests in state organisations, societal influences and international influences.

Finally, the chapter began to explore the social, economic and political ramifications of the framing of land as a social policy issue. While neo-liberalism regards property rights solely from the perspective of economic efficiency, land access also has vitally important implications for 'social' issues such as livelihood security and inequality. Furthermore, different forms of land tenure imply different relationships between the state and its citizens.

3

Methodology: A case-based approach to social policy analysis

The analytical framework in chapter two presents several methodological challenges. The research must integrate macro-, meso- and micro-level analysis encompassing policy formulation—the intentions of policymakers—and implementation—the adaptation of those policies on the ground. In addition, the research integrates analysis of discourse and action. This chapter develops a methodology to meet these requirements, as well as evaluating other common methods used in social policy analysis. The methodology builds on the ‘case study method’ (Yin 2008), outlining a *case-based approach* to the analysis of social policy. In doing so, the study contributes to the literature on research methodologies, in particular constituting one response to the call to align methodology in political analysis with developments in the philosophy of science (Hall 2003). In particular, the chapter builds on work on realism, which conceptualises social reality in terms of interlinked open social systems and acknowledges the existence of both ‘personal cognizing experience *and* durable social phenomena’ (Miles and Huberman 1984, p. 21).

The next section discusses common approaches to social policy analysis, considering the positivist, variable-based approaches that have dominated the field and constructivism. The chapter then provides an overview of the realist, case-based approach pursued in this thesis. I apply the case-based approach to the research problem, first defining the units of analysis, before discussing the data sources and the analytical approach, and the selection of cases. In the final section I address the ethical implications of the study.

Methodological approaches to social policy analysis

Positivist, variable-based methodologies dominate social policy research. Although many utilise statistics, there is also an important body of variable-based, qualitative research examining the determinants of social policy (Amenta 2003). Positivist research is concerned with discovering social laws and regularities and, consequently, regards the experimental method, which aims to separate phenomena under study from their environment, as the only scientific means of demonstrating causality. As such, most positivist social research attempts to approximate this ideal.

Positivist, variable-based research has been used for a number of purposes relevant to this thesis. One common objective has been to evaluate the impact of social programmes. Methodologies such as Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and quasi-experimental research designs involving

baseline and endline surveys have, for example, been used to examine the impact of conditional cash transfers on access to healthcare (Lagarde *et al.* 2007) and health outcomes (Fernald *et al.* 2008), and the impact of incentives on immunisation rates (Banerjee *et al.* 2010). A second body of work uses cluster analysis to classify types of social policy regime as a means to understanding different types of social provision (Esping-Andersen 1990, Rudra 2007, Abu Sharkh and Gough 2010). Although this analytical strategy has been used by some researchers to refine or prevaricate over new typologies (Abrahamson 1999, Arts and Gelissen 2002, Saint-Arnaud and Bernard 2003), in some cases these classifications are also used as a starting point for a causal analysis of social policy development (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990).

Finally, both quantitative and qualitative variable-based methods have been used to investigate the determinants of social policy. Quantitative approaches conduct regression analyses using national level cross-sectional or time-series datasets to assess the influence of factors such as democracy and trade openness on social spending (Brown and Hunter 1999, Kaufman and Segura-Ubierto 2001, Avelino *et al.* 2005, Rudra and Haggard 2005). Meanwhile, qualitative methods have often refuted or expanded on the findings of quantitative analyses (Amenta 2003). The motivation for this qualitative research is usually practical rather than philosophical, driven by a lack of data availability and operationalization problems. This research is based on the comparative method, which draws on John Stuart Mill's *Methods of Difference and Agreement* (Przeworski and Teune 1970). Examples of this type of qualitative research utilise formalised Boolean analysis (Ragin 1994, Amenta and Poulsen 1996, Kvist 1999) or may be more detailed and descriptive (Orloff and Skocpol 1984) but rely on similar assumptions.

Positivist, variable-based approaches present three main problems in relation to the present study. First, positivist epistemologies assume an unproblematic relationship between knowledge and reality (Fischer and Forester 1993, Rochefort and Cobb 1993, Hastings 1998). Consequently, positivist research considers social problems as objective rather than recognising their socially constructed nature (Hastings 1998). Acceptance of the ontological perspectives that knowledge is theory-laden and that social issues are constructed as legitimate areas for state intervention are therefore difficult to reconcile with positivism.

The second issue regards the nature of causality. The framework highlights the complex interaction between multiple causal processes. In particular, there is explicit recognition of recursive interactions between state policy and social structures, and politics and social policy. Analyses which attempt to isolate the causal effect on a dependent variable of individual independent variables are problematic given their limited ability to take into account complex causal processes, necessary and sufficient conditions, tipping points and policy feedback (Ragin 2000, Hall 2003). Indeed, Mill himself warned against using his *Methods of Agreement and Difference* to examine social processes because of the causal complexity in the social world (Mill 1887, Tilly 1997).

The final issue relates to the assumption of unit homogeneity that underpins variable-based approaches. Unit homogeneity assumes that two or more comparable cases can be found which vary only in the factors of interest to the research. However, the plausibility of basing analysis on the comparability of 'big structures' such as states is disputed (Tilly 1997). In addition, unit homogeneity assumes that variables 'have a real existence separate from the entities that had

variate properties' (Byrne 2001, p. 63)—that one aspect of a case is independent of its other aspects (Ragin 2000). In contrast, the framework stresses the importance of considering social policy in a systemic perspective. Just as an intervention addressing food security should be analysed in the overall socioeconomic context at the macro level, at the micro level, the impact of a policy on an individual is related to the particular opportunities and risks faced by that person.

Constructivist research has been far less influential than positivism in social policy studies. Nevertheless, constructivist research, in particular discourse analysis, has made some important contributions. Approaches to discourse analysis take many forms. Some constructivist ontologies view language as a form of action that discursively creates social reality. Consequently, discourse analysis is considered to be an all-encompassing paradigm, rather than a method (Hammersley 2003). This ontological assumption has important implications. First, constructivism rejects the possibility of a social reality independent of the researcher. Instead, there are as many social realities as there are people, with none more valid than the others. Logically, therefore, it is impossible to prove the greater accuracy of any one account of events, calling into question the value of academic research (Hammersley 1997). Second, viewing discourse as a paradigm rejects a 'representational model of language, whereby statements are held to correspond to phenomena that exist independently of them' (Hammersley 2003, p. 756). Consequently, respondents' accounts are the topic of research, not a source of information, challenging the value of other methods (Hammersley 2003).

A realist alternative recognises the social construction of discourse but considers discourse to be just one aspect of social reality (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999), not a 'self-sufficient' approach to social analysis (Hammersley 2003, p. 751). It follows therefore that discourse analysis *should* be combined with an analysis of the context within which it was created (Fairclough 1995, Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, Hammersley 2003). This is especially appropriate when studying policy formulation since discourse analysis of policy documents only analyses the final outcome of the process, providing no information on the interactions between actors during formulation. Realist discourse analysis has been applied to 'social' policy issues including urban planning (Hastings 1998) and housing (Marston 2004).

The case-based approach

The methodology in this thesis builds on work on case study methods, in political science and sociology, and the sociological literature on realism. This case-based approach assumes 'a reality independent of the researcher whose nature can be known, and that the aim of research is to produce accounts that correspond to reality' (Hammersley 1991, p. 43). According to realists, social reality consists of interlinked 'open systems', with the result that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between a social system and its environment (Sayer 1992, p. 121, Byrne 2001). This is one important distinction between realism and positivism, which assumes the possibility of closed systems, enabling the researcher to control relevant causal processes.

Realism conceives causality as taking place through the actions of mechanisms within and between open social systems (Mahoney 2001, Hall 2003, George and Bennett 2004). Causal mechanisms are properties of social objects and, consequently, 'a causal claim is not about a

regularity between separate things or events but about what an object is like and what it can do and only derivatively what it will do in any particular situation' (Sayer 1992, p. 105, Tilly 1995, 2001). Research 'aims to unpick the relations which constitute social practices and so identify the mechanisms' at work (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, p.27), either by providing evidence regarding the existence of theoretically proposed causal mechanisms or through 'retroduction' to work 'backwards from outcomes to causal mechanisms' capable of producing events described (Mahoney 2001, p. 591, Sayer 1992).

While some causal mechanisms may be strong, resulting in common patterns or tendencies, since they operate in open systems they are not deterministic but contingent. However, '[d]espite a widespread belief to the contrary, the alternative to nomological thinking is not a mere description or narrative' (Elster 1993, pp. 2–3). Although conceptualising causality in terms of the complex interaction of causal mechanisms places limits on the generalisability of findings (Elster 1993), it is sometimes possible to highlight contingent explanations based on common patterns of interaction between causal mechanisms and their contexts (George and Bennett 2004).

Though realism assumes a social reality independent of the researcher, this reality is only indirectly accessible through culturally-rooted individual experiences (Hammersley 1991). Consequently, and in contrast to some ethnographic approaches, social reality cannot be known through direct experience alone (Hammersley 1991). Indeed, it is not possible to know with certainty the validity of a particular claim—whether it accurately represents the phenomenon under study. Rather acceptance of findings as knowledge requires researchers and their readers to make assessments regarding a reasonable degree of confidence in a claim's validity. Drawing on Hammersley (1991), this assessment should be based on the weight of evidence presented and the nature of the finding. For example, if a finding is entirely consistent with existing theory, the necessary evidentiary threshold is lower than that for a finding that contradicts a well-supported theory. Confidence in the validity of findings is enhanced through repeated moves between theory and evidence, testing theoretical explanations with new observations and questioning assumptions in those observations.

One obvious question regarding this strategy concerns the criteria against which the impact of a policy can be assessed, when programme objectives are socially constructed. The analysis in this thesis takes two approaches. First, the impact of social programmes is assessed in terms of their achievement of their stated objectives. Given that many policies have quite different impacts from those expected by their designers, the variation between policy and practice can be illuminating. Second, just because there is no objectively correct issue that social policy should address, does not mean that all possible interventions are equally valid. Clearly some social policy framings are less reasonable than others. Consequently, the impact of a social policy is assessed relative to alternative, theoretically informed, framings for social issues. For example, regarding the use of land as a social policy, the egalitarian and protective functions of state ownership can be contrasted with the rationales of the private property and communal discourses.

‘Casing’ the political economy of social policy in Ethiopia

This section begins to apply the case-based methodology to the phenomena under study. The first step is to define the study’s cases. ‘Casing’ is a theoretical step that creates homogeneous categories of cases (Ragin 1992, p. 217) that are ‘selective representations’ based on theoretical assumptions of what is and is not relevant to the study (Hammersley 1991, p. 69). Consequently, though case-based research, like ethnography or grounded theory, examines a phenomenon in context, the approaches differ in that data generation and analysis in case-based approaches are theoretically guided (George and Bennett 2004, Yin 2008).

The methodology described in the remainder of this chapter aims to inform the analytical framework outlined in chapter two. Nevertheless, the scope and ambition of the framework present significant practical and methodological challenges, in particular with respect to the trade off between breadth and depth given time and financial constraints. The following discussion therefore discusses both the methodological approach employed and its shortcomings with respect to the framework. Drawing on the framework, the state-in-society approach identifies arenas of state-society interaction which constitute the study’s cases: the commanding heights and central agency offices that engage in policy formulation; and the dispersed field offices and trenches responsible for policy implementation (Migdal 2001).

Policy formulation

Analysis of policy formulation addresses the first research question: *how are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?* The analysis also contributes to the third research question: *what are the implications of this social policy strategy for state-society relations?* The timeframe covered by the study focuses on the period from 1991, when the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power, to the end of fieldwork in September 2010. However, in order to provide historical context, parts of the analysis extend back to the creation of Ethiopia’s borders at the end of the nineteenth century.

Federal government

According to the Ethiopian constitution, the federal government has the power to ‘formulate and implement the country’s policies, strategies and plans in respect of overall economic, social and development matters’ (FDRE 1994, para. 51), while regional governments formulate policies within the federal framework (FDRE 1994, para. 52). Despite the federal structure, past research has found that in practice the federal government retains most decision-making power (Aalen 2002, Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Assefa Fiseha 2006).

Key data sources for analysis of the federal case include key informant interviews with federal government policymakers, representatives of Ethiopia’s foreign donors and opposition parties, and relevant policy documents and laws. However, gaining access to the key actors in the policy formulation process constituted a significant practical challenge. Past studies have highlighted the extremely centralised nature of government policymaking comprising the Prime Minister and his senior advisers, and senior officials in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Dessalegn Rahmato 2009). Despite my best efforts, in the time available I was unable to secure interviews with this policy elite and was instead restricted to

interviews with senior officials in key ministries and departments who were, nevertheless, not involved in many of the key strategic decisions made by the government.

While it was easier to arrange interviews with representatives of donor agencies and senior members of opposition political parties, in the case of Ethiopia's donors, the frequent transfer of staff between country offices mean that in many cases current incumbents have only limited knowledge of policymaking processes surrounding even relatively recent decisions. To a significant extent then, the analysis of policy formulation relies on discourse analysis of official policy documents and public statements made by former Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, supported, where relevant, with data from the interviews that were conducted. These policy documents and official statements constitute the end point of the process of policy formulation. While the analysis reveals much about the government's priorities and interests, as a result, the contribution of the thesis to understanding the actual process of policy formulation and the political negotiations involved is less than I had initially hoped. The data sources and analytical approach are discussed at length in the following section.

Analysis of the federal case asks:

- How are discourses used to delineate the boundaries of social policy and justify social interventions?
- What social issues are excluded and what alternative discourses could be drawn upon?
- How do government discourses contrast with those of actors such as donors and opposition political parties?
- What are the implications of these discourses for state-society relations, and individual and group rights?

Regional governments

While the federal government outlines the national development and social policy strategies, the constitution devolves responsibility in certain policy areas, including land administration, to ethno-regional administrations (*kilil*), requiring them to formulate regional policies within the federal framework. The main data sources for the analysis of regional cases were key informant interviews with representatives of relevant government departments and representatives of donor agencies working specifically at the regional level, and regional laws and policy documents. At this level of analysis, gaining access to key informants involved in policy decisions was much easier and consequently interviews were able to explore the details of regional laws, variation between regions and the federal laws, and the rationale used by officials to justify this variation.

Analysis of the regional cases asks:

- What freedom do regional administrations have to formulate policies relevant to regional contexts?
- What discourses do they invoke to justify variation from federal policy?
- What are the implications of devolved administration for the rights of ethnic groups and individuals?

Policy implementation

Below the regional governments there are several administrative layers that constitute arenas of competition and collaboration between state and society regarding policy implementation. Precisely, regions are divided into zones, *wereda* (districts) and *kebele* (sub-districts, known as *tabiya* in Tigray – see figure 3.1). The responsibilities of zones and *wereda* comprise oversight of lower levels of administration, compliance with government targets and allocation of resources between administrative districts (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Markakis 2011). These administrations constitute the ‘dispersed field offices’ of Migdal’s anthropology of the state (Migdal 2001). Below the *wereda*, *kebele* administrations, each responsible for several villages, interpret and translate policy into practice and constitute ‘the trenches’ (Migdal 2001).

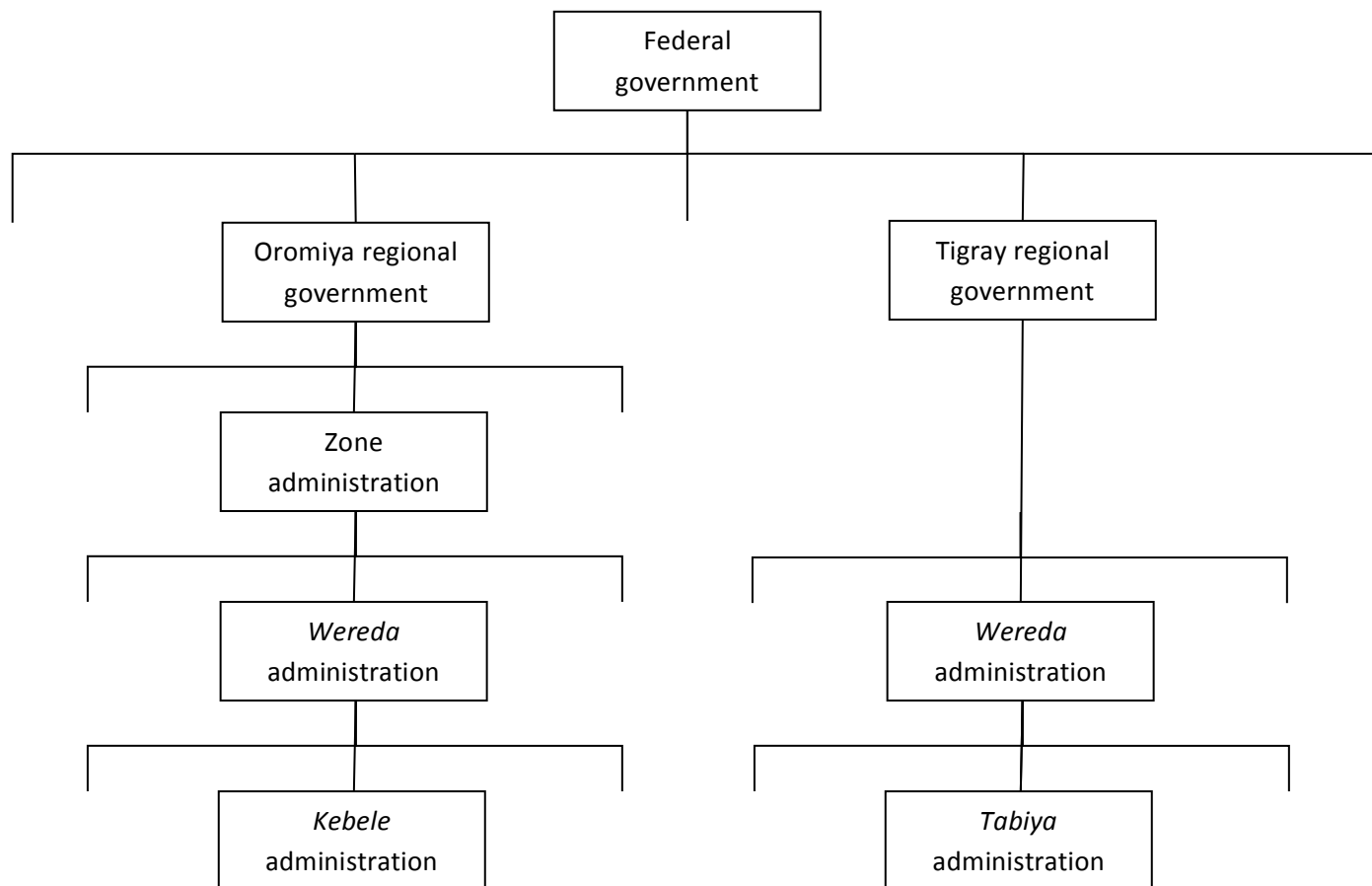
Analysis of policy implementation addresses the second research question, *how are these social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?* As with policy formulation, micro level analysis has important implications for the third research question regarding social policy and state-society relations. Each of the implementation case studies focuses on a particular *kebele* within a *wereda* and a zone. At these lower levels of administration, there are more cases than would be feasible to study and it is therefore necessary to select cases (see below).

Zone and wereda administrations

The role of zones in policy implementation varies by region. In Tigray, a relatively small region, the region deals directly with *wereda* and the zone has no role. In contrast, in Oromiya, a much larger region, zones act as intermediaries between the region and *wereda*, monitoring and coordinating the activities of lower levels of government, with zones and *wereda* playing similar roles albeit over different territorial units. They are responsible to higher levels of government for applying policies and meeting targets set by their superiors. However, they are in contact with lower level administrations responsible for policy implementation.

The main data for analysis of policymaking within zone and *wereda* administrations are key informant interviews with managers of relevant departments. While access to these officials was obtained relatively easily, the interviews only provided relatively limited insights into the political dynamics surrounding their role in the policymaking process. In particular, it was not possible to spend large amounts of time conducting repeated interviews and observing their daily activities, which might have enabled a deeper understanding of these processes. Furthermore, while federal and regional policy statements provide an approximate guide to the expectations of senior government officials, the important decisions these officials make regarding implementation are not generally described in publicly available documents. As a result, in many cases it is not easy to contrast policy expectations with clear outcomes of the decisions taken. While administrations produce some zone and *wereda* statistics on relevant issues, these are frequently not comprehensive and were not always made available to me. As a result, analysis at this level relies primarily on one-off interviews with key officials.

Figure 3.1. The structure of government institutions



With a view to addressing the second research question, the analysis of these cases asks:

- What power do administrators have to influence policy?
- What discourses do they invoke to justify policy choices?
- How do they reconcile competing discourses from above and below?

Kebele administrations

Analysis of the implementation and impact of policies at the local level draws on a set of village level case studies. These cases studies involve key informant interviews with local government officials, community elders, and representatives of NGOs, businesses and donor agencies working in the villages. The case studies also draw on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with residents of the case study sites, ensuring coverage by class, gender, ethnicity and generation. These qualitative data are complemented with analysis of quantitative data from an existing socioeconomic household panel survey (see below) and, where available, *kebele* records of landholdings, social assistance and agricultural extension programmes. While much was achieved during the time spent in each site, the importance of examining links between policy areas and political context across multiple case studies necessarily limited the time spent in each site and, consequently, the level of detail of analysis possible regarding the political dynamics of policy implementation.

At the *kebele* level, case studies focus on three main categories of actors: local government officials, non-governmental sources of power and the people who are the target of social interventions. The case studies ask:

- What discourses are invoked to justify changes to social policies during implementation?
- How do combinations of state social policies impact on different types of people?
- What are the implications of government social policy for state-society relations?

Key local state officials include the *kebele* chairman and manager, members of relevant policy committees, members of the social court who preside over disputes and the Development Agents (DAs) who provide extension services. The research focuses on these officials' knowledge and understanding of the policies they implement, the decisions they make regarding the application of the policies and how these policies fit with local reality.

Potential non-governmental sources of power and influence include ethnic and religious leaders, elders involved in dispute resolution, wealthy farmers, community organisations and businesses. Research on these groups assesses their relationship to the state, their interests and their influence over policy implementation.

Finally, case studies examine the impact of state policies on local people, differentiated by age, class, gender and ethnicity. Rather than assessing the impact of a policy in isolation from its socioeconomic environment, the case-based approach assesses policy impact by focusing on types of people and how a combination of state policies, interventions by non-state actors and the social context of production combine to produce particular forms of risk and opportunity (Bevan *et al.* 2009). Analysis also considers the responses of different types of people to state policies, drawing on Hirschman's framework (1970). For example, do people: adhere to the

expectations of government policy; protest against policies that they oppose; or diverge from state-prescribed behaviour or engage in illegal activities?

Case-based analysis and data sources

I pursue an analytic strategy described by Yin (2008, p. 141) as 'explanation building'. The fieldwork began with initial theoretical propositions that were compared to empirical evidence, reformulated and tested on new evidence, either from the same or a different case. This iterative process involves a continuous interplay between data and theory (Hammersley 1991, Hammersley and Atkinson 1995), developing and testing theories across multiple cases and sub-cases (King *et al.* 1994). Consequently, fieldwork and analysis are overlapping stages in the research process. Provisional analyses, inevitably constrained by the demands of fieldwork, take place throughout the time in the field and are used to guide subsequent data generation (Becker 1958). The final stage of analysis occurs after fieldwork has been completed, and at this stage it is necessary to rebuild explanations and models as thoroughly as possible to ensure their validity (Becker 1958).

A strength of case study research is the ability to draw on a variety of data sources and data generation⁶ techniques (Yin 2008). Individual data generation techniques cannot provide an accurate picture of an entire case and its various aspects, rather different techniques, each of which produces a 'trace' of a phenomenon, are required to build up a refined picture (Byrne 2001, p. 64, Bevan 2006, p. 4). This analysis requires triangulation between data sources with convergent lines of inquiry.

The research considers all forms of qualitative and quantitative data to be imperfect and selective representations of social reality. Consequently the relevance, credibility and validity of each data source are assessed during analysis. A number of strategies are pursued to assign evidentiary weight to data. Priority is given to repeated, consistent observations, which increase confidence in validity. This triangulation can be achieved between the observations of independent respondents, different data sources and observations made at different points in time. An additional strategy for increasing confidence in validity involves the postulation of alternate explanations for the phenomena observed based on existing theories and, if necessary, the targeted generation of additional data which rejects or supports these explanations.

The scope of this thesis presents complex demands in terms of data generation and analysis. In developing its argument, it requires data from a wide range of sources. Both the broad scope of the thesis and the ambition to link processes at the macro, meso and micro levels resulted in repeated moves between theory, the existing literature on Ethiopia and observations. These iterations were a necessary part of the design and evolution of the research. As such, some of the analysis presented in the following chapters cannot be traced back to single, specific sources since they bring together findings from fieldwork as well as primary analysis of secondary sources, including statistics and existing literature. The aim of this section is to outline the principles used

⁶ Researchers generate data, rather than collecting them, since their choice and execution of methods contributes to a particular representation of social reality (Bevan 2006).

to generate, analyse and assign weight to data. This section considers the main data sources in turn: policy documents and discourse analysis; interviews; and statistics.

Policy documents and discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is used to identify the social policy discourses employed by the government to justify particular interventions. These discourses are then traced to interviews with state officials tasked with policy implementation and non-governmental actors as a means of analysing their choices and motivations.

Government policy documents are considered to be the outcome of the policy formulation process. They constitute rationalised documents that remove discussion and doubt, which occurred during deliberation (Gasper 1996). They should consequently be viewed as a form of argumentation (Fischer and Forester 1993, Gasper 1996, Hastings 1998), employing narratives which frame issues and construct problems, leading the reader to the final decision of the policymakers: what ‘inescapably ought to be done’ (Gasper and Apthorpe 1996, p. 6, Stone 1988). These constructions are used for particular political purposes (Hastings 1998).

The analyst’s task is to deconstruct these arguments, identifying their ideological foundations and the interests that they represent. Discourse analysis requires the specification of the arguments, with particular attention paid to a number of factors. First, discourses ‘intersperse technical and scientific arguments with more generally accessible narratives that fit together the specialists’ arguments ... to generate compelling stories about the causes of current problems, what needs to be done to remedy them, and how they fit with the underlying values of the society’ (Schmidt 2008, p. 309). A key part of this narrative is the framing of the argument (Fischer 2003). Policy frames define not only what is on the policy agenda and what is excluded (Bachrach and Baratz 1962), but also how issues on the agenda are constructed (Bacchi 2000). This process of agenda setting plays a major role in limiting policy options to only those that fit within the chosen frame.

A complementary process is that of naming and labelling (Wood 1985, Eyben and Moncrieffe 2007). Social phenomena are selected for attention and constructed as problems based on the frame in use (Apthorpe 1996). Labelling creates categories and identifies certain things or groups as legitimate targets for action. Inevitably, labelling involves power relationships—powerful actors label groups of people and things in order to influence how they should be treated (Eyben and Moncrieffe 2007).

Chapter four presents the discourse analysis of the English language policy documents produced by the Ethiopian government. These include three Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and sectoral strategies on food security, education, health and rural development. Given that the main audience for these publications is Ethiopia’s foreign donors, I also sought policy statements made by senior government officials in other fora, anticipating that government social policy discourse might vary depending on the audience. Unfortunately, there are relatively few detailed English language statements available. Journalists’ interviews with senior government officials are usually reduced to short sound bites rather than detailed discussion and justification of government policy, while I was unsuccessful in my own attempts to secure interviews with members of the top government leadership. As a result, this analysis is limited to two

presentations made by former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to academic audiences and two discussions between Meles and Ethiopian and foreign academics.

During my first reading of these data sources, I identified the main 'social' issues raised in the documents and the policies proposed to address them. I used subsequent readings of the sources, first, to specify in greater detail the concepts and ideas invoked by the authors to justify their focus and policy choices, and, second, to explore the degree to which these ideas reinforced or contradicted one another. During an iterative process, these ideas were then classified into the distinct discourses presented in chapter four. This process of classification involved difficult choices regarding the exact groupings. Similar, albeit less detailed, conclusions concerning the justifications used by government officials for social interventions have been drawn by other researchers, and this provides some support for my classification. It is, however, acknowledged that other researchers conducting the analysis might have arrived at a slightly different grouping. This classification of discourses does, nonetheless, provide a useful entry point to begin the analysis of the social and political objectives of social policy, and also provides a useful analytical lens through which to examine variation in the process of social policy implementation.

Key informant interviews

Interviews constituted the majority of the fieldwork undertaken and play two main roles in the analysis. First, key informant interviews are used to examine the decisions made by government officials during policy formulation and implementation. These interviews are an important tool for process tracing since they provide access to respondents that directly witnessed events and can therefore be used either to confirm information revealed by documentary evidence or to reconstruct an undocumented sequence of events (George and Bennett 2004, Tansey 2007). Second, in-depth interviews constitute an important source of information on people's experiences of government policies, and their impacts on individuals and households.

Interview data are selective representations of reality based on individuals' interpretation of particular events. Interview data should therefore be carefully assessed for use as a source of information. A number of criteria, similar to those used by historians to assess the value of written sources (Becker 1958, George and Bennett 2004), can be used to attribute weight to interview testimony. These include: the role of the respondent in the event in question; the context of their testimony; and their interests in reporting the events (Gottschalk *et al.* 1945, Milligan 1979).

The first criterion relates to the position of the source in relation to the phenomenon. Generally speaking, greater weight should be attributed to respondents who directly witnessed a phenomenon. Equally, attention must be paid to the time lag in between an event and the respondent's testimony, with a greater time lag likely to increase the chance of inaccurate descriptions.

The context of the interview is also extremely important. For example, a respondent may answer differently if an interview is conducted one-on-one between researcher and respondent compared to a more open situation where friends or neighbours also participate. The impact of the context is not, however, always straightforward. Depending on the person and the questions asked, respondents may either feel uncomfortable speaking in the company of other people or

feel more at ease when accompanied by friends. The researcher has to make an assessment of the influence of contextual factors on the testimony. In contrast with the treatment of historical sources, the use of interviews for evidence of particular events also requires acknowledgement of the role of the researcher and how s/he is perceived by respondents. In particular, as a white male, accompanied by an Ethiopian male research assistant, I was no doubt perceived to be wealthy and eccentric by many respondents, while some female respondents appeared reluctant to speak openly, especially when alone. To a certain degree these problems were mitigated by conducting interviews in a variety of settings. This included the selection of some secluded environments for interviews, while encouraging additional discussions involving more participants, in particular interviewing women with female friends. Nevertheless, it was not possible to completely overcome the problems, and the restrictions they placed on the research—in particular regarding women's voices—are acknowledged.

An additional contextual factor relates to whether information is volunteered by respondents or arises in response to the researcher's questions. One important skill of an interviewer is to avoid leading questions. Nonetheless, the interviewer must guide the interview to particular topics of interest (Legard *et al.* 2003). Consequently, there is a chance that it could raise the chances of eliciting consistent answers. Information volunteered by respondents can be attributed greater weight than responses to direct questions. Researchers must also make an assessment of the respondent's interests and whether they have reason to mislead the researcher.

The interviews presented a number of practical challenges. A white man walking through an Ethiopian village is an object of considerable fascination. Frequently therefore, what began as a private interview rapidly grew to include children and (mostly male) adults who came to find out what was being discussed and to contribute their opinions, spawning impromptu focus groups. While these additional views added to the richness of the data, on several occasions groups became unmanageable. In addition, in certain cases the presence of other people limited respondents' willingness to give full answers. This was particularly the case with some female respondents, as the presence of male relatives or neighbours compounded the difficulty of being interviewed by a male researcher and male research assistant. Unfortunately, there is little recognition of space for private conversations in Ethiopian villages, and it is considered rude to ask people to leave (Young 1997). Consequently, they were unavoidable limitations.

The politically sensitive nature of the research made the fieldwork particularly challenging. Many respondents were hesitant to discuss political issues, presumably due to fears of repercussions. In addition, the most common interaction of most rural Ethiopians with white people has been with relief agencies, missionaries or agricultural investors. These associations may well have influenced my respondents' perception of me, their expectations that they might be able to profit from the encounter and consequently their answers to my questions. Before every interview, I attempted to address these concerns by emphasising my independence. This may have helped to a degree, but inevitably some respondents remained cautious about their responses. Furthermore, most of the study sites are part of an existing panel survey (see below) and as such people in those communities are accustomed to being interviewed for research. In a few cases this contributed to respondent fatigue and an unwillingness to participate in 'yet another' interview. However, on the whole positive past experiences probably contributed to a greater willingness of respondents to partake in the research and speak openly.

Language presented an additional challenge. Approximately 80 languages are spoken in Ethiopia. The language of the federal government is Amharic, while regional administrations use the languages of the dominant ethnic group. Most senior federal and regional government officials speak good English and, consequently, these interviews were conducted in English. However, at lower levels of government far fewer people speak English and none of the residents of my case study sites did so. As the case studies were conducted in different linguistic regions, learning all the languages required would not have been feasible and so I employed research assistants as interpreters. It was therefore necessary to familiarise the research assistants with the aims of the research, as well as working on interview techniques. This process was made easier because all the research assistants were postgraduate social science students at Addis Ababa University and consequently had some knowledge of the concepts and issues being studied, as well as experience of conducting their own fieldwork.

Given the tense political context, respondents were reluctant to have their responses recorded, despite assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Accordingly, respondents' testimonies were documented by thorough note-taking. To ensure data reliability, I frequently checked my understanding of respondents' answers both during the interview and, in interviews conducted through a research assistant, the following evening with my research assistants as I wrote up my notes. Though audio recordings of interviews would have been preferable to provide an additional check regarding respondents' testimonies, I accepted the limitations of note-taking based on the data analysis that I had planned. Interviews are used to provide information on events and processes, and to trace the use of social policy discourses identified in policy documents. This strategy places considerably lower requirements on documentation of the interviews than would be the case if fine-grained discourse analysis were to be attempted.

In total, I conducted more than 200 semi-structured interviews (see table 3.1 and examples of interview schedules in appendix A) during a year of fieldwork between October 2009 and September 2010. While this may seem a large number of interviews, they range considerably in their scope and purpose. Some interviews lasted only 15 minutes and provided very specific pieces of information which the respondent was in a position to provide, while others were redundant in terms of data analysis but were a means of contacting gatekeepers who facilitated access to the research sites. Meanwhile, some of the interviews were much more detailed, lasting up to two hours (appendix B provides details of the respondents).

Before entering research sites, the *kebele* administration required letters of permission from the relevant regional, zonal and *wereda* administrations, based on a letter of introduction from Addis Ababa University, where I was registered as an affiliate researcher. Once the *kebele* administration in each site was aware of my presence, I was able to move about the community and speak to local people without restrictions. I began by selecting respondents opportunistically, as I walked about the villages, getting a sense of the relevance of my fieldwork plans to reality on the ground. As these interviews raised particular issues, I began to target my selection to relevant types of people, as well as seeking to cover a range of respondents by age, gender, ethnicity and class.

Table 3.1. Details of interviews conducted

Case	Number of interviews	Time period
Federal & regional governments	39	September 2009 – September 2010
Turufe Kechema	52	January 2010
Geblen	56	April 2010
Korodegaga	18	December 2009
Hawi Gudina	17	September 2010
Waqqee Xiyyoo	21	December 2009 & March 2010

Statistical data

Despite the previous critique of variable-based research, quantitative data can play useful roles in case-based analysis. Statistics can be used both to set cases in context (Hammersley 1991) and to examine sub-units of a case to improve understanding of the whole (Yin 2008). Consequently, I use macro statistical data to situate micro level studies within the context of the national case and household data to provide additional information on the community context and individual respondents. In contrast to variable-based statistical techniques, which seek uniformity in datasets by calculating means and regression lines of particular variables, I pursue a case-based analysis of quantitative data, identifying different types of case using theoretically-informed typologies, acknowledging diversity and the frequency of different types.

As with testimony from qualitative interviews, it is important to examine the validity and credibility of quantitative data. The criteria used are broadly similar. For secondary datasets, it is important to ask who created the dataset and for what purpose. Equally, survey data generated by third parties, though a potentially important source of information, must be treated with caution. Assessment of the validity of these datasets might consider whether respondents are likely to be able to answer the questions and whether they have interests in misrepresenting their situation.

Most of the cases selected are drawn from a sample covered by the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS), a longitudinal household survey with seven rounds in fifteen sites, beginning in 1994 (Dercon and Hoddinott 2009). In addition, related fieldwork by the Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) generated quantitative and qualitative data on four of the same sites in 2005 and 2006 (Bevan 2009). These datasets provide information on landholdings, land use, crops farmed, access to government services, and income and expenditure. These data give some indication of changes over time since 1994. Furthermore, *kebele* officials in case study sites provided records on landholdings, cash transfers and extension packages, which constitute an additional source of household data.

The analysis also utilises datasets on foreign and domestic agricultural investment projects compiled by government agencies at the federal and regional levels. These datasets are used to analyse the spatial pattern of commercial agricultural investments, the types of investments and the roles they play in the economy. Finally, the research selectively draws on macro data from Ethiopian government sources and international organisations including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), World Bank and various United Nations

agencies. These sources provide specific information on relevant aspects of agricultural production, food security, aid and trade.

Case selection

The selection of micro-level cases is based on proposed causal mechanisms that identify ways in which government policies are likely to be adapted during implementation. These propositions are derived from existing theory and the literature on Ethiopia.

The federal land policy justifies state land ownership based on the protection of peasants from market forces and the promotion of equality. Access to land, free of charge is a constitutionally enshrined right. Nonetheless, population growth constrains the government's ability to fulfil this guarantee, leading to land shortages and landlessness. Additionally, rising international food and fuel prices present economic opportunities for investors and increase pressure for agricultural commercialisation and transformation of systems of production (GRAIN 2008, Cotula *et al.* 2009, Zoomers 2010, De Schutter 2011). According to property rights theory, land scarcity and changes in relative prices should lead to pressure for privatisation of property (North 1981). This pressure is mediated by the state, which has interests in maximising revenues (Levi 1992, Joireman 2000). Consequently, the first proposition suggests that *population growth and commercialisation will lead to pressure for private property rights, with states most likely to initiate change in areas with potential to contribute to state revenues.*

Since 1994, Ethiopia has instituted an ethnic federal system. Ethiopian federalism is based on ethnic groups' right to self-determination, requiring ethno-regional administrations to formulate land policies within the constraints of the federal policy. A federal system which draws round ethnic groups (Horowitz 1985) in the context of population growth and land shortages could be expected to contribute to competition over land between indigenous inhabitants and outsiders. This would result in ethnicity becoming a political category governing land access, resonating with aspects of communal tenure. In addition, establishing ethnic-based state institutions at the local level provides structural linkages around which grass roots coalitions can 'crystallize' (Houtzager 2005, p. 94), potentially altering implementation of land policy towards a communal basis. As such, the second proposition suggests that *ethnic federalism will lead to local pressure for ethnic politicisation of land and support for communal land tenure.*

Finally, some critics of the government's land policy argue that the government uses land to maintain political control since state ownership prevents class formation and brings the state into direct contact with a weak peasantry (Dessalegn Rahmato 2009, Markakis 2011). The threat to the state and the need for the state to exert political control is likely to vary within its territory (Boone 2003). One source of potential opposition is proposed by Boone (2003), who argues that the threat posed by local elites varies based on the economic importance of a region, the degree of social stratification, and relations of dependency and cooperation between local elites and central government. A possible alternative source of political mobilisation is along ethnic lines. Indeed, the present Ethiopian government began as an ethno-nationalist movement and a number of other ethnic movements remain active today. According to the third proposition,

imperatives of political control will lead to variation in land administration based on the threat posed to the central state by local groups.

The implementation case studies are designed to demonstrate the existence or otherwise of these causal mechanisms. The cases selected are ones where causal mechanisms are ‘most-likely’, indicating that if a causal mechanism does not exist in the case study, it is unlikely to exist in other ‘least-likely’ cases (Eckstein 1975, p. 119). As the operation of these mechanisms is contingent rather than deterministic, the objective is not to choose cases that are representative of Ethiopia. Rather, the analysis situates causal mechanisms identified in micro case studies within broad transformative processes revealed through macro level analysis, linking processes at macro and micro levels, while acknowledging their contingent outcomes.

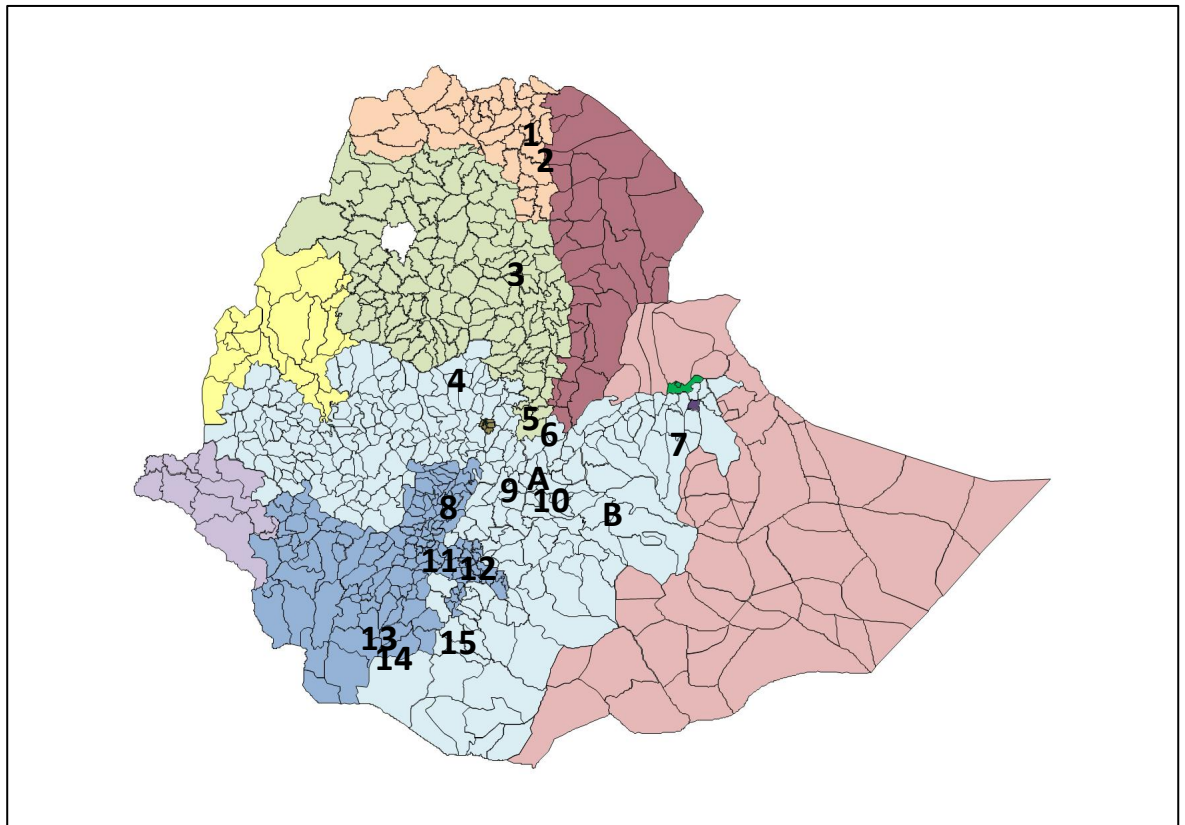
Case selection was based on ERHS data and community profiles of the sites in the *Ethiopian Village Studies* (EVS) that accompanied the ERHS and WeD research (Bevan and Pankhurst 1996, Bevan *et al.* 2006). I used this information to identify which sites constitute ‘most likely’ cases for each of the causal mechanisms likely to affect policy implementation. The discussion is summarised in table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Selection criteria for case study sites

Research site	Agriculture	Ethnicity	Relation to state
Adado (Gedeo, SNNPR)	Cash crop	Homogeneous	Marginal
Adele Keke (Oromiya)	Cash crop	Homogeneous	Most likely threat
Aze Debo’a (Kembata, SNNPR)	Food insecure	Homogeneous	Marginal
Debre Birhan (Amhara)	Food secure	Mixed (peaceful)	Possible threat
Dinki (Amhara)	Food insecure	Mixed (conflict)	Marginal
Do’oma (Gamo Gofa, SNNPR)	Food secure	Mixed (peaceful)	Marginal
Gara Godo (Wolayita, SNNPR)	Food insecure	Homogeneous	Marginal
Geblen (Tigray)	Food insecure	Mixed (peaceful)	Likely support
Harresaw (Tigray)	Food insecure	Homogeneous	Likely support
Hawi Gudina (Oromiya)*	Food insecure	Homogeneous	Marginal
Imdibir (Gurage, SNNPR)	Food secure	Homogeneous	Marginal
Korodegaga (Oromiya)	Food insecure/cash crop	Homogeneous	Most likely threat
Shumsheha (Amhara)	Food insecure	Homogeneous	Marginal
Sirbana Godeti (Oromiya)	Grain surplus	Homogeneous	Most likely threat
Turufe Kechema (Oromiya)	Grain surplus	Mixed (conflict)	Most likely threat
Waqqee Xiyoo (Oromiya)*	Cash crop	Homogeneous	Most likely threat
Yetmen (Amhara)	Grain surplus	Homogeneous	Possible threat
Key:	Main cases	Secondary cases	*These sites are not in the ERHS

In all fifteen sites (see map 3.1), population growth has led to land shortages and landlessness, while the information presented in the EVS makes it difficult to identify cases where land shortages are particularly extreme. As such this factor was not used to discriminate between cases.

Map 3.1. Location of the research sites



Key: 1 - Geblen; 2 - Harresaw; 3 - Shumshena; 4 - Yetmen; 5 - Debre Birhan; 6 - Dinki; 7 - Adele Keke; 8 - Imdibir; 9 - Sirbana Godeti; 10 - Korodegaga; 11 - Aze Debo'a; 12 - Turufe Kechema; 13 - Gara Godo; 14 - Do'oma; 15 - Adado; A - Waqqee Xiyyoo; B - Hawi Gudina.

Increased demand for land resulting from agricultural commercialisation is most likely in grain surplus and cash crop producing areas. The majority of the ERHS sites are in areas of ox-plough agriculture, while an additional five sites are situated in areas of enset cultivation using hoe agriculture. Seven of the sites are food insecure, producing almost exclusively for self-consumption. Korodegaga, though a food insecure site, has in recent years become a destination for private investors growing vegetables due to its potential for irrigation. Four of the sites (Debre Birhan, Sirbana Godeti, Turufe Kechema, Yetmen) are grain-surplus producing with many petty commodity producers providing for their own subsistence, as well as marketing a surplus. Just three of the sites produce crops primarily for sale. In some cases it may be possible to intercrop cash crops with subsistence crops, as is the case in Adado, where farmers intercrop coffee and enset. In Adele Keke (*chat*) and Korodegaga (fresh vegetables), meanwhile, farmers must decide how much land to allocate to subsistence crops and how much to cash crops.

In order to examine processes of ethnic mobilisation around land issues, I focused on ethnically heterogeneous sites. In Turufe Kechema, the EVS report conflicts and tensions between the Oromo majority and other ethnic groups, in particular the Kembata, while in Dinki the Amhara and Argoba residents have cooperated in conflicts with the neighbouring Afar. The EVS do not report ethnic conflicts in the other sites.

Finally, consideration of the potential threat of opposition to the government requires an assessment of the relationship between local elites and the state. Based on the existing literature, some indication can be inferred from their ethnic region. The ruling party is widely considered to be dominated by Tigrawi politicians and consequently draws considerable support from Tigray (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Clapham 2009, Markakis 2011). The sites in Tigray—Geblen and Harresaw—are therefore considered areas of likely government support. Although there has been some opposition to the government in Amhara and parts of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), Oromiya is widely regarded as posing the greatest potential threat to the government. The Oromo constitute the largest ethnic group, there is a marginal secessionist movement (the Oromo Liberation Front) and many Oromo resent perceived oppression by successive governments dominated by 'northern' ethnic groups, including the EPRDF (Vaughan 2003, Asafa Jalata 2005). In addition, Oromiya contains a large proportion of the land with the greatest agricultural potential. Surplus producing sites located in Oromiya are, therefore, considered the most likely sources of opposition.

Inherent to the selection of cases is the tension between competing research objectives: on the one hand the detailed examination of individual cases to ensure a profound analysis; and, on the other, the desire to examine multiple cases to reflect some of the variation within Ethiopia. Inevitably, if more cases are selected, less time is available to spend in each site, and, in all likelihood, this will limit the depth of analysis possible. A key focus of the framework outlined in the previous chapter is the links between policies and the political and socioeconomic context within which they operate. To examine these links and, for example, variation in the relationship between the federal state and society, and social policy in different agricultural contexts, it is clearly necessary to select multiple cases. This inevitably places certain limitations on the depth of analysis of individual case studies.

Two main cases were selected which highlight the three main factors of interest—different types of agriculture, heterogeneous ethnic composition and variation in relations with the state. These are: Geblen, an ethnically mixed but peaceful, food insecure site with a majority Tigrawi population likely to be supportive of the government; and Turufe Kechema, an ethnically mixed site with past ethnic conflict, in a grain surplus producing area with a majority Oromo population that could constitute a source of opposition. Both cases are in ox-plough agricultural systems.⁷ I spent approximately four weeks conducting fieldwork in each of these sites.

The ERHS sample does not contain examples of large-scale commercial agriculture, which has been an important development in Ethiopia in recent years. Consequently, two additional, shorter case studies were selected to examine different forms of commercialisation. These are Waqqee Xiyyoo—a state-owned sugar cane plantation—and Hawi Gudina—a foreign owned bio-fuel investment. In addition, Korodegaga, originally selected as a pilot study (Yin 2008), provides a contrasting form of investment by small-scale domestic private investors. Although I contacted several foreign investors requesting interviews, given the tense political climate surrounding agricultural investment, many were reluctant to take part in the research. The managers of the project in Hawi Gudina were among the few that allowed me open access to staff and the project

⁷ My original plan was to also conduct a case study in Adado, where agriculture is based on hoe cultivation. Unfortunately, fieldwork in March 2010 had to be abandoned as heavy rains made the site inaccessible.

sites. Waqgee Xiyoo, meanwhile, is situated close to Korodegaga and during my pilot study in Korodegaga, I ascertained the suitability of the site for inclusion in the thesis and was able to make preliminary contacts in the site. This somewhat opportunistic selection of cases nevertheless ensured variation by type of investor, size of project and the form of agriculture established. I spent between one and two weeks conducting fieldwork in each of these shorter case studies.

Ethical considerations

The research design raises a number of ethical questions related to the protection of those involved in the research. Reports of state infringement of individual rights and outright persecution of the EPRDF's opponents have been raised by such a variety of sources (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Abbink 2006a, Aalen and Tronvoll 2009, Dessalegn Rahmato 2009, Human Rights Watch 2010) that they cannot be dismissed. Those potentially at risk include government officials, residents of the study sites and research assistants.

The protection of those involved is addressed in a number of ways. Before each interview I explained the objectives of my research and my independence from the government. I assured all respondents that their testimony would be confidential and that any responses used in the thesis would be attributed anonymously. In this way I sought the respondents' informed consent to participate in the research. On the whole, most non-governmental respondents were willing to talk to me, though on occasion, consent was not forthcoming and the interview was abandoned. The ERHS has already published the names of its research sites. As such, any attempt to anonymise the villages at this stage would be rather pointless. Nevertheless, the testimony of residents of the sites is attributed anonymously and I am confident that these respondents could not be identified based on the information in the thesis.

Meanwhile, the concern of state officials was evident in that, almost without exception, they required a letter of permission from their supervisor in order to speak to me. While this may have protected them from personal liability, it also compromised their anonymity. However, once this request was fulfilled most government respondents were helpful and forthcoming during interviews.

Finally, I frequently discussed the issues raised by this thesis and my interpretation of individual interviews with my research assistants throughout the research process. While these discussions were extremely useful for me, our views frequently differed. All interpretation of results in this thesis are my own and do not necessarily in any way reflect the views of the research assistants that contributed to the project.

PART TWO

POLICY FORMULATION:

VISIONS OF SOCIAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

4

Competing visions of social policy in Ethiopia

Part two of this thesis addresses the first research question: *how are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?* Chapter four focuses on the federal government and presents a discourse analysis of the strategies and policy documents that constitute the outcome of the policy formulation process. Chapter five examines how the discourses identified in chapter four are reflected in the details of federal and regional policies.

Analysis in this chapter identifies and specifies the government's social policy discourses, and examines how they are used to justify the adoption of particular policies. I analyse federal government policy documents, in particular the three Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) (MoFED 2002, 2005, 2010)—as well as the *Rural Development Policy and Strategies* (MoFED 2003) and *Food Security Programme* (FSP) (MoARD 2009). In addition to these official documents, which are drafted in part for the audience of Ethiopia's foreign donors, I analyse several statements made by former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (1995-2012)⁸ at policy discussions with Ethiopian (The Reporter 2000) and foreign academics (Marcus 1995), and speeches made at the University of Manchester (Meles Zenawi 2006) and Columbia University (Meles Zenawi 2010).

Although there have been many evaluations and assessments of individual social programmes, to my knowledge, only one other piece of work has analysed Ethiopian social policy as a whole. Bevan's (2006) institutionalist analysis concludes that balance of institutional responsibility for social provision and, consequently, the outcomes in terms of insecurity and welfare in Ethiopia vary according to three constituent groups. The largest of these comprises the 'bulk of Ethiopia's residents', predominately in rural areas, who rely on 'informal security regimes' (Bevan 2006, p. 27). The main form of security for these people is provided by 'family and community networks and organisations' (Bevan 2006, p. 2), with the minimal role of state social policy limited to the provision of donor-financed, 'patchy' and inadequate services in education, health and food aid, if anything (Bevan 2006, p. 23). In contrast, a small political and economic urban elite enjoy access to a mixture of international and domestic private social provision, while those occupying border regions, in particular the pastoralist population, are excluded from state provision and, partly due

⁸ Meles died unexpectedly in August 2012, shortly before the submission of this thesis.

to international events, are exposed to crisis situations resulting in 'insecurity and illfare' (Bevan 2006, p. 27).

Bevan provides an insightful analysis of the power dynamics of Ethiopian social policy. However, her conclusions regarding state social policy contrast with the social policy discourses identified in the following analysis. These discourses identify the peasantry as a central concern of state social policy. In particular the analysis shows that government discourse identifies land tenure as a central feature of social policy and politics in Ethiopia, and that the use of state land ownership for social objectives constitutes a key feature of peasant livelihoods. Competing social policy discourses frame the land question in very different ways, with important implications for the role of the state in development and the class basis of agricultural production. As such, land is selected as the central focus of the thesis.

The next section provides a brief historical analysis of the Ethiopian state and social policy. The chapter then identifies four rural social policy discourses used by the current government. The following section draws together the analysis, examining the rationales of the various social policy discourses and their implications for the development strategy, identifying land tenure as a key area of tension. The final section concludes.

Background: The Ethiopian state and social policy

The Imperial era (to 1974)

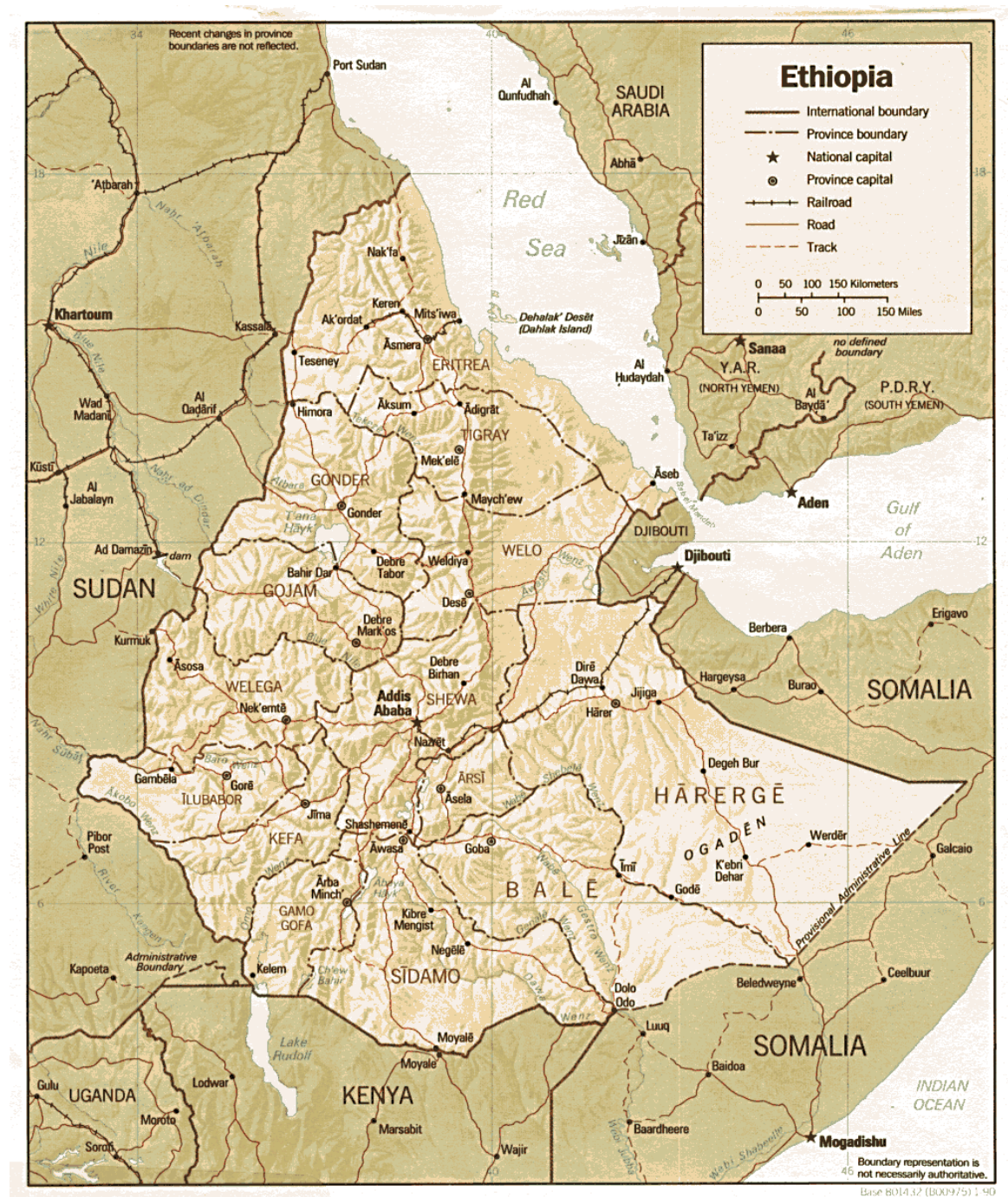
Over the past 2,000 years the Ethiopian polity has expanded and contracted from a core in the northern highlands (comprising parts of Tigray, Eritrea and Gonder, see map 4.1) based on internal power struggles (Bahru Zewde 1991, Clapham 2000, 2002). It was only after Emperor Menelik (1889-1913) defeated an Italian invasion at the Battle of Adwa in 1896 that Ethiopia's borders were formalised with neighbouring European colonial powers. These borders included recently conquered and weakly incorporated lands in the south, west and east (Bahru Zewde 1991, Donham and James 2002). With the exception of Eritrea, which was ceded to Italy as part of the peace agreement following the Battle of Adwa, then federated with Ethiopia in 1950 before seceding in 1993 following a long civil war, these borders correspond to those of contemporary Ethiopia.

In order to compete with neighbouring colonial powers and maintain independence, the Imperial state deemed it necessary to modernise the bureaucracy, a process which included the creation of Ministries of Education and Health in the 1940s (Clapham 1988, Bahru Zewde 1991, Abebe Fisseha 2000). Increases in social expenditure from the 1940s onwards were primarily urban-focused and partly financed by US aid, which secured American access to a strategically important airbase near Asmara (Clapham 1988, Henze 2000).

In the historic centre of Ethiopia the dominant land tenure was *rist*. Under *rist*, peasants (*ristegna*) had usufruct rights to land based on descent from a common ancestor, while a landlord class (*gultegna*) was appointed by the Emperor and collected tribute (*gult*) (Joireman 2000). These *gultegna* were the agents of the state in the countryside but remained dependent on the

Emperor for their position, rather than developing a political base of their own. Several authors criticised this system as economically inefficient because it discouraged migration since land could not be sold and long-term investment as neither *ristegna* nor *gultegna* had secure long-term rights to any particular land (Joireman 2000).

Map 4.1. Administrative regions during late Imperial and Derg eras (1950 – 1991)



Source: Perry-Castañeda Library, University of Texas at Austin

In highland parts of the recently conquered south, the exploitative *neftegna-gebbar* tenure system was designed to allow northern settlers appointed by the Emperor (*neftegna*) to exert political control over tribute-paying southern peasants (*gebbar*) in economically important areas

(Joireman 2000). In contrast, many lowland areas, where the dominant systems of production were agro-pastoralism and shifting cultivation, were never fully incorporated into the Imperial state but were subject to the extraction of resources through tribute, taxes and raids for slaves and ivory (Donham 2002, Garretson 2002, Dereje Feyissa 2006).

In the final decades of Imperial rule, *neftegna-gebbar* was gradually replaced by private property in areas of economic importance, providing the tenure security necessary for landowners to invest in commercial agriculture (Henze 2000, Joireman 2000). At this time the Imperial government also encouraged foreign agricultural investment, displacing pastoralists in relatively accessible areas and providing foreign investors with long-term leases. These included sesame production in Humera,⁹ and cotton and sugar on the banks of the Awash River (Clapham 1988, Bahru Zewde 2008, Dessalegn Rahmato 2009). Consequently, land tenure in Imperial Ethiopia varied according to the political and economic requirements of the state.

Food insecurity has a history going back at least a century (Pankhurst 1966) due to the dependence of grain-producing areas on rainfall, as well as social and political factors, including tenure systems which limited migration and productivity (Joireman 2000). Little state action was taken during the 1973 famine in Tigray and Wollo as a result of weak infrastructure and the indifference of the ruling elite to the suffering of rural people (Lefort 1983). However, international pressure did force Ethiopia to open its doors for the first time to international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) providing humanitarian assistance (Dessalegn Rahmato 2002, Kassahun Berhanu 2002). The famine also contributed to urban disenchantment with the Emperor due to rising food prices and the perception that the government cared little about its people (Lefort 1983, Clapham 1988, De Waal 1997).

The Derg and Mengistu Haile Mariam (1974-1991)

Failure to address the 1973 famine, the exploitative nature of land tenure in the south, growing urban unemployment and radicalisation of the student movement led many to question the Emperor's legitimacy and the pace of modernisation (Clapham 1988, Henze 2000, Tekeste Negash 2006). A series of protests by students and taxi drivers, amongst others, was among the principal factors leading to the downfall of the Imperial dynasty in 1974 (Clapham 1988). Ultimately, however, the army was the only sufficiently organised force able to take power and a committee of junior military officers known as the *Derg* established a new government.

As the Derg's initially communal leadership gave way to the centralisation of power under Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Derg adopted a radical Marxist agenda, influenced by links to the student movement and the need to exert political control (Clapham 1988). Perhaps the most important change was the 1975 land reform that nationalised all land and redistributed usufruct rights to peasants (PDRE 1975). This reform was justified as an egalitarian social policy, correcting the historical injustice of exploitative land tenure. In addition, the reform served the Derg's political interests by destroying the landed elite that constituted a powerful threat to the new regime (Clapham 1988). Land reform was part of a process of *encadrement*, which incorporated 'people into structures of control' (Bevan 2006, p. 9). The establishment of state-controlled peasant associations in each rural community and a programme of villagisation brought the

⁹ Marked 'Himora' on map 4.1.

central state into highland rural areas to a degree not previously seen (Clapham 1988, 2002, Tadesse Berisso 2002). Meanwhile, the few capitalist farms were nationalised and turned into state farms and many lowland areas that had only been partially incorporated under Imperial rule remained beyond the day-to-day control of the state (James *et al.* 2002).

Although initially popular with southern peasants, land reform destroyed the system of surplus extraction—based on the nobility—leading to urban food shortages (Clapham 1988). The second stage of the land reform enacted collective agriculture and villagisation, ostensibly to facilitate the provision of rural social services. However, reform served the purposes of political control, surplus extraction and conscription (Clapham 1988, Dessalegn Rahmato 1991), and adherence to these Marxist-Leninist policies brought financial and military support from the Soviet Union and Cuba (Clapham 1988, Henze 2000).

In Ethiopia, as elsewhere, collective agriculture was unpopular, and the compulsory purchase of grain quotas at below market rates provided little incentive for farmers to invest in production (Ghose 1985, Saith 1985, De Waal 1997). The inefficiency of the agricultural system contributed to food insecurity and alienated the peasantry. In addition, the education and healthcare used to justify villagisation rarely materialised. These failings fuelled insurrections in Eritrea and Tigray during the 1970s and 80s with the result that state resources were devoted to the military at the expense of social expenditure (Dessalegn Rahmato 1993b, Young 1997, Kloos 1998).

Despite initial successes, including the first land reform, literacy campaigns and increased educational enrolment (Tekeste Negash 2006), the redistributive intentions of the *Derg* foundered due to escalating military expenditure and the need to cater to urban interests, which demanded low food prices and resisted the prioritisation of rural services (Clapham 1988, Kloos 1998). Consequently, although educational enrolment increased, the lack of funding meant declining quality (Clapham 1988, Kloos 1998, Tekeste Negash 2006), while user fees were introduced to cover healthcare costs putting access beyond the reach of many (Kloos 1998, Abay Asfaw *et al.* 2004).

Like *rist*, the *Derg*'s land policy discouraged migration and exacerbated land shortages (Clapham 1988). Along with the failures of collectivisation, the disruption caused by fighting in the north (De Waal 1997) and drought in 1983-84, land shortages contributed to the 1984/85 famine. Rather than address food insecurity, however, the *Derg*'s response exacerbated it. Humanitarian aid was withheld and a scorched earth policy pursued in opposition areas (Keller 1992, De Waal 1997). Additionally, a policy of forced resettlement, ostensibly to relieve pressure on land, in fact removed about three million people (Kloos 1998) from opposition areas to so-called 'virgin land' in the lowlands, ignoring existing land uses of pastoralists and shifting cultivators (Pankhurst 1992, p. 54). Ultimately, international pressure enabled international NGOs to establish a presence (Dessalegn Rahmato 2002, Kassahun Berhanu 2002). However, this was not sufficient to prevent the deaths of at least one million people (Keller 1992, Bevan 2006).

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) (1991-present)

Historically, Tigray was at Ethiopia's political centre. Recent centuries, however, saw the region peripheralised as political and economic power shifted to the south, with a new capital established at Addis Ababa in Shewa and the incorporation of economically important regions in

the south at the end of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, recognition by Shewan leaders of Italian colonisation of Eritrea divided Tigrigna-speaking populations in Eritrea and Tigray and was seen by some Tigrayans as buying protection for Shewa at their expense (Young 1997).

Although ethnicity had been a prominent issue in the student movement since the 1960s, the *Derg* dismissed ethnicity as a diversion from class consciousness (Mekuria Bulcha 1996). The result was a proliferation of ethnic movements fighting for greater autonomy within or secession from Ethiopia. Of these the most important were the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). From the mid-1970s, the TPLF instigated a Maoist-inspired insurrection led by a young, radical intelligentsia which built support based on the movement's proximity to the peasantry (Young 1997, Medhane Tadesse and Young 2003). Drawing on discontent with oppressive *Derg* policies, the TPLF fomented resentment at the neglect of Tigray by 'Amhara' rulers,¹⁰ mobilising peasants around a message of ethnic nationalism (Young 1997).

After long, bloody campaigns, the EPLF and TPLF succeeded in removing *Derg* troops first from their home regions and in 1991 from Addis Ababa. During this process, the TPLF created the EPRDF, an umbrella organisation comprising ethnically-affiliated regional parties of which the TPLF was the principal member. The EPRDF established the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE), dominated by the EPRDF but including a number of other political parties, responsible for drafting a new constitution and preparing for elections in 1995. These elections were won by EPRDF-affiliated parties under the new Prime Minister and TPLF leader, Meles Zenawi. This process brought about major political, economic and social transformations.

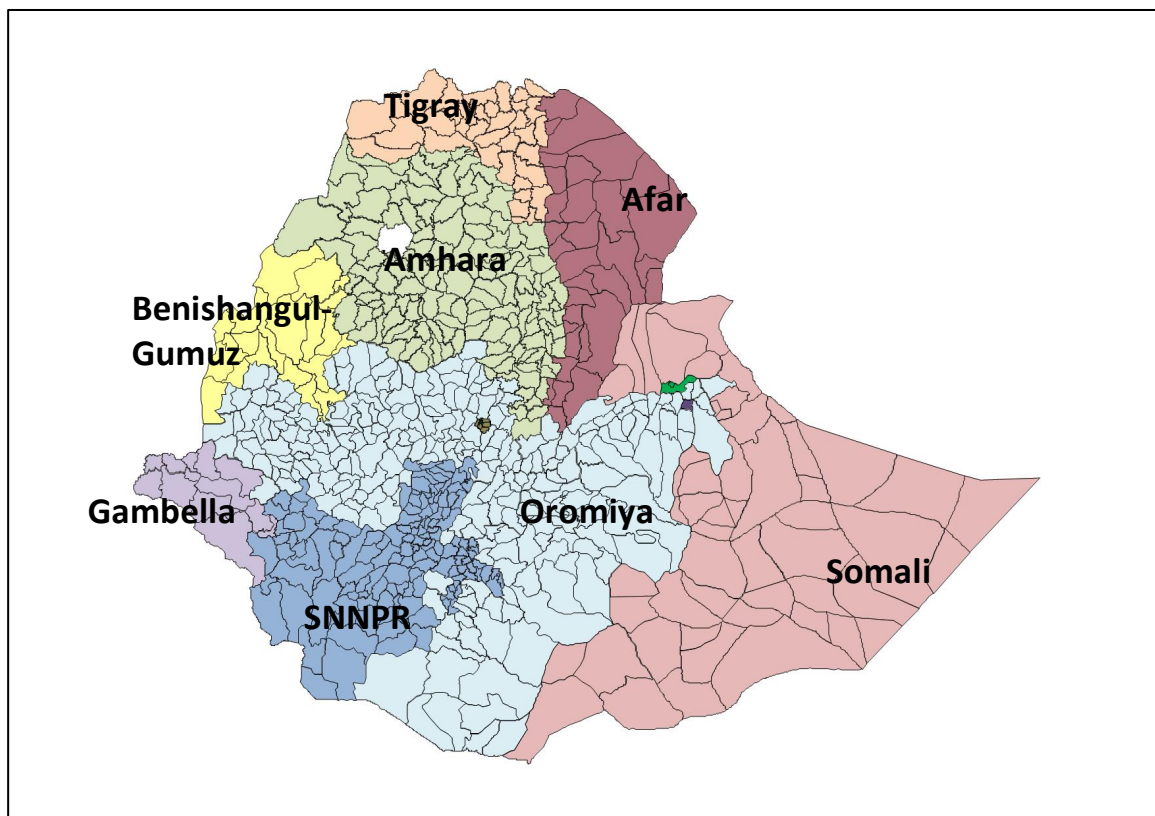
First, the EPRDF committed to democratisation, and elections have been held regularly since 1995. However, given that the EPRDF has won all the elections, many observers have questioned the democratic commitment of the government and its role in constraining the activities of opposition parties, restricting the press, academics, trade unions and NGOs (Pausewang *et al.* 2002, Abbink 2006a, Aalen and Tronvoll 2009, Tronvoll 2011). Second, the EPRDF established a federal system, using an ethno-linguistic criterion to draw round ethnic groups and delineate *kilil* (ethnic regions – see map 4.2). These regions were given full rights of self-determination including secession (FDRE 1994, para. 39), allowing Eritrea to secede in 1993. Third, the government committed to liberalising the command economy inherited from the *Derg* and negotiated a structural adjustment programme with foreign donors in the early 1990s, leading to the privatisation of some state organisations, liberalisation of international trade and currency devaluation (Krishnan *et al.* 1998).

These reforms were viewed positively by western donors, resulting in increased financial support (Vaughan 2003). Furthermore, the EPRDF has exploited Ethiopia's important geo-political position, as a western ally in a volatile region—surrounded by Somalia, (North and South) Sudan and Eritrea—(Borchgrevink 2008, Furtado and Smith 2009), as well as a promising record of

¹⁰ This characterisation of 'the Amhara' is contested by observers who argue that Amhara membership is open and flexible, allowing descendents of non-Amhara to assimilate within a few generations (Clapham 1988, Donham 2002, Mackonen Michael 2008). Indeed, neither Haile Selassie nor Mengistu Haile Mariam had Amhara origins. Assimilation does, however, require the subordination of other ethnic identities, and critics argue that Imperial and *Derg* Ethiopia were dominated by Amhara culture (Clapham 1988).

economic growth and poverty reduction. Consequently, aid flows to Ethiopia have increased rapidly despite serious question marks regarding the EPRDF's democratic credentials. In recent years, the largest donors, according to OECD data, have been the World Bank, the US, the UK and Germany, with China an increasingly important source of funding.¹¹

Map 4.2. *Kilil* (ethnic regions) under the EPRDF



While aid constitutes approximately 20 per cent of government expenditure, past research has found the government to be relatively autonomous from donor influence. As a country that was never colonised, donor influence over policymaking is seen as an infringement of national sovereignty (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Borchgrevink 2008, Furtado and Smith 2009), while the government has limited donor influence by: centralising communications with donors through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (Harrison 2002, Furtado and Smith 2009); limiting donor technical assistance in key ministries, especially MoFED; and exploiting the fungibility of funding (Furtado and Smith 2009). Meanwhile, support from China, in particular for infrastructure projects, has reduced reliance on western donors (Dereje Feyissa 2011).

Summary

This discussion has highlighted important differences and continuities across the three regimes that have dominated Ethiopia's recent history. The Derg, which promoted a communist social policy within its financial limitations, constituted an abrupt break from the Imperial regime, whose power rested on the exploitation of the peasantry by the nobility. While the EPRDF has

¹¹ There are no official statistics on Chinese aid and, consequently, it is unclear how Chinese aid flows compare to those of western donors.

announced its commitment to liberal economy policy and democratisation, the origins of the party in Marxist and Maoist political philosophy constitute a quite different influence on policy. The contradictions between these political philosophies and their impact on social policy are explored in the remainder of this chapter. Finally, despite evident differences between regimes, two notable continuities across the three regimes include the importance of land in maintaining state power, and the vital interaction between the international sphere and domestic politics in the formulation of public policy.

Social policy discourses under the EPRDF

This section identifies four discourses that the government has used to justify state interventions with explicitly social objectives. These discourses are the product of the analysis and classification described in chapter three, rather than categories explicitly used by the government. The overwhelming focus of government policy and these discourses is on rural areas. The discourse on *poverty reduction* is most prominent in the PRSPs and closely fits donor best practice. However, competing discourses on *productivist social policy*, *universal peasant security* and *egalitarianism* imply a far greater role for the state in managing social and economic processes, and are therefore in tension with the neo-liberal assumptions of the poverty reduction approach.

Poverty reduction

Since the late 1990s, poverty reduction has been adopted as the overarching objective of the development industry (Mosley *et al.* 2004). This goal has driven the design of the PRSP and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) initiatives, and virtually all multilateral and bilateral aid and debt relief is contingent upon World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) approval of the content of the PRSP and the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) respectively. Given the importance to the government of foreign aid, it is hardly surprising that *poverty reduction* is the most prominent discourse in the PRSPs.

The goal of poverty reduction identifies poor people, rather than the socioeconomic structures that generate poverty, as the focus of social policy (Hickey 2008a). While in comparison to early structural adjustment programmes the poverty reduction approach demands an increased role for the state in the provision of basic social services and social protection, critics have argued that the two approaches are based on the same neo-liberal principles (Mkandawire 2004b, Gottschalk 2005). In both models, the macroeconomic framework is designed first—prioritising the free market and macroeconomic stability—and state social policy is secondary—limited to social services and safety nets for those that lose out through the workings of the market (ILO 2004).

This development model assumes that the market is the most efficient means of distributing resources. Consequently, economic policy should remove barriers to market processes, ensure secure property rights and promote macroeconomic stability to provide a stable climate for private sector investment, including international capital. This emphasis is outlined in the PRSP Sourcebook, prepared by the World Bank to guide developing countries preparing their PRSPs,

‘Studies show that capital accumulation by the private sector drives growth. Therefore, a key objective of a country’s poverty reduction strategy should be to establish conditions that facilitate private sector investment ... the broad objective of macroeconomic policy should be the establishment or strengthening of macroeconomic stability’ (Ames et al. 2002, pp. 5–7).

State social policy, meanwhile, provides two supporting roles. The first is investment in basic services such as primary education and healthcare, which expand opportunities for the poor to participate in market activities. This approach focuses on the instrumental role of social policy in increasing the productivity of ‘human capital’, rather than the intrinsic value of the policy to those that receive it (Müller 2011, Ron-Balsera 2011). For example, the expansion of basic social services is central to MDGs 2, 4, 5 and 6, and the PRSP Sourcebook suggests that,

‘policymakers should implement policies that empower the poor and create the conditions that would permit them to move into new as well as existing areas of opportunity, thereby allowing them to better share in the fruits of economic growth. The objectives of such policies should include ... increasing the human capital base of the poor through the provision of basic health and education services’ (Ames et al. 2002, p. 7).

The second social policy role is to provide social protection to those unable to take advantage of market opportunities,

‘It is ... crucial to have social safety nets in place to ensure that poor households are able to maintain minimum consumption levels and access to basic social services during periods of crisis ... the measures should be well targeted and designed in most cases to provide temporary support’ (Ames et al. 2002, p. 17).

Design of these policies is dominated by concerns regarding potential disincentive effects (Standing 2010). This frequently leads to a focus on effective targeting mechanisms to make the most of limited government spending and ensure that assistance is limited to those most in need (Mkandawire 2005, Standing 2010). Furthermore, the poverty reduction discourse promotes the integration of the poor into the market economy. As a result, social protection programmes should be temporary, while inclusion is made conditional on adherence to desired behaviour, ensuring that programmes reach only the ‘deserving’ poor (Hickey 2010, p. 1143, Standing 2010). The poverty reduction discourse therefore justifies programmes that aim ‘to transform poor people into better, more productive members of society’ (Hickey 2008a, p. 353).

The Ethiopian PRSPs draw heavily on this poverty reduction discourse, highlighting the difference between the ‘liberalized’ economy under the EPRDF and the ‘controlled’ economy under the *Derg* (MoFED 2002, p. 20). The PRSPs emphasise that the ‘free’ market is the best means of achieving poverty reduction, which constitutes the government’s ‘overriding development agenda’ (MoFED 2005, p. 18). Promotion of the free market requires a stable climate for private investment,

‘The objectives [of poverty reduction] ... emphasize the need to create a favorable climate for stimulating investment and productivity ... this entails maintaining macroeconomic stability, monetary expansion consistent with targets of single digit

inflation as well as a stable exchange rate and sustainable external sector development' (MoFED 2005, p. 57).

Meanwhile, a process of land registration has been conducted in recent years (MoFED 2005, p. 7), ostensibly to provide secure property rights to promote economic investment (Solomon Abebe n.d.). Although this falls short of full private property rights, the registration process has been praised by the World Bank and is in line with latest World Bank policy which views land registration as a suitable intermediate step in developing countries (Deininger and Binswanger 1999, Cord 2002).

Regarding social policy, the PRSPs stress the importance of social investment through education, health and water and sanitation services due to their effects on the 'productivity' of 'human capital' (MoFED 2002, p. 12). The poverty reduction discourse is also used to justify the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), a social protection programme designed to address chronic food insecurity by providing targeted and conditional support to food insecure households.¹² The government frames food insecurity as a naturally-occurring problem resulting from unreliable weather (MoFED 2002), 'land degradation and high population pressure', and inadequate knowledge of the farmers themselves who have consequently 'lost the capacity to be productive' (MoFED 2005, p. 95). In this way, food security is identified as an obstacle to, rather than a product of, the government's development strategy.

The PSNP was established in 2005 to replace various food-for-work and food aid programmes run by the government, donors and NGOs, funded by emergency appeals according to annual needs. Although the previous system enabled the survival of food insecure households, the failure to provide reliable and timely support resulted in distress sales of assets which damaged future food security, with ever greater numbers requiring assistance (Raisin 2001). Donor consultants proposed a programme that would supply reliable, longer-term assistance to the chronically food insecure (Raisin 2003).

The government's Food Security Programme (FSP) distinguishes between chronically food insecure households and those facing temporary shocks. While those facing temporary problems continue to receive emergency relief, the donor-funded PSNP provides cash or food-for-work to approximately eight million chronically food insecure people. Assistance is targeted to food insecure districts, and government officials and community participants select the poorest households. Those selected receive guaranteed support for six months a year for five years or until the participant 'graduates' from support, providing a reliable, medium-term source of income. For most recipients, assistance is conditional upon participation in public works. However, those unable to work receive unconditional 'direct support'.

A key government concern is that the PSNP will create a 'dependency syndrome', with participants relying on support and making inadequate efforts to become self-sufficient (New Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia 2003a, Brown and Amdissa Teshome 2007, MoARD 2009). Consequently, the government insisted on public works components to ensure that able bodied

¹² This is not to argue that basic social services and targeted safety net programmes can *only* be justified based on the poverty reduction discourse, but that in the Ethiopian PRSPs the government presents these policies so as to echo the poverty reduction discourse.

participants work for the support they receive (respondents FD8 and FD9 - see appendix B, The IDL Group n.d., Devereux *et al.* 2006). The PSNP is therefore paternalistic, using the assumption that participants are prone to dependency to justify state interventions that restrict the choices of poor people. In addition, the FSP includes policies that aim to complement the PSNP by improving the productive capacities of food insecure households to the point at which they become self-sufficient and are able to 'graduate' from assistance.¹³ In particular, the labour-intensive public works and capital-intensive Complementary Community Investments (CCIs) both aim to improve community infrastructure such as roads, terracing and irrigation, and the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) provides extension packages including livestock, improved seed varieties and fertiliser on credit. If correctly implemented under the guidance of government Development Agents (DAs), these policies are expected to enable the vast majority of people to achieve self-sufficiency.

During the first five year programme (2005-09), the PSNP operated in the four highland regions—Amhara, Oromiya, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) and Tigray—where most settled farmers reside, while food insecure households in the remaining regions, where livelihoods include agro-pastoralism and shifting cultivation, continued to rely on emergency support. In the second round, which began in 2010, the PSNP is being piloted in some pastoral areas.

Productivist social policy

For the neo-liberal poverty reduction approach, the instrumental justification for state social policy—that social interventions can have economically productive impacts—is limited to the provision of basic social services, since these public goods would otherwise be undersupplied by the market. In contrast, for the Ethiopian government the provision of basic social services fits within a much wider *productivist* discourse which envisages a central state role in the allocation of factors of production—labour, capital and land (MoFED 2002, p. 53).

Since the early 1990s, the centrepiece of the EPRDF's development strategy has been Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI). This strategy argues that as a labour-rich and capital-poor country, in order to make the best use of the country's resources, labour-intensive, non-mechanised agriculture should be implemented alongside technologies such as irrigation, fertiliser and improved seeds, which improve yields but do not replace labour (MoFED 2003). Increased agricultural productivity will lead to national food security and stimulate labour-intensive industry through forward linkages, such as the supply of wage foods and industrial inputs, and backward linkages, providing demand for domestic production of fertiliser, farm implements and consumption goods. Consequently '[a]griculture is ... believed to be a potential source to generate primary surplus to fuel the growth of other sectors of the economy (industry)' (MoFED 2002, p. 41).

¹³ Based on an assessment of households' ability to meet annual consumption requirements and withstand modest shocks.

In important respects ADLI attempts to replicate the primitive accumulation in South Korea and Taiwan (Meles Zenawi 2012).¹⁴ Many researchers examining the early stages of structural transformation in these countries highlight the vital state role in agricultural transformation (Amsden 1979, Byres 1991, Kay 2002). In addition to the productivist orientation of social policy (Gough 2004a, Kwon 2004), the South Korean and Taiwanese states enacted compulsory land redistributions justified on social grounds (Chang 2004), ensuring the domination of smallholder production (Byres 1991). In order to ensure that smallholder cultivation remained the dominant system of production, the state also prevented accumulation through ceilings on land ownership (Koo 1971, Chang 2009). Furthermore, the state invested heavily in large-scale irrigation infrastructure and agricultural research on high-yield seed varieties, distributed fertiliser and improved seeds, and ensured their adoption by farmers, leading to rapid productivity increases (Amsden 1979, Burmeister 1990, Karshenas 1996, Kay 2002). Finally, the state played an important role in surplus extraction through compulsory grain sales, manipulation of agricultural input and output prices, and taxation, using this agricultural surplus to finance industrialisation (Lee 1971, Amsden 1979, Burmeister 1990, Kay 2002).

ADLI requires the Ethiopian state to take a central role in economic and social policy to ensure the dominance of smallholder agriculture rather than more capital-intensive forms of production, which might result from market pressures. Accordingly, this discourse is used to justify the continuation of state land ownership introduced by the Derg. The importance of the land policy was often recognised by the former Prime Minister,

‘The decision we took in terms of the land ownership system is therefore one of the critical decisions that have made it possible for us to try and implement an alternative to the neo-liberal paradigm’ (Meles Zenawi 2006).

This productivist discourse is also used to justify the important social role of the land policy in preventing the ‘urbanisation of rural poverty’ through the displacement of the peasantry (Meles cited in Devereux *et al.* 2005, p. 122) and the growth of a politically dangerous class of under- and unemployed urban migrants (MOIPAD 2001). Meles argued that allowing market processes to determine land access would lead to a ‘social explosion’ as peasant farmers, evicted from their land would have little possibility of employment elsewhere. Indeed, if a market in land were established,

‘a good number of those who are working on the land now would have to be shifted from agriculture to other endeavors. We do not believe that we have the type of those [jobs] that would allow us to shift in big numbers to make consolidation possible, without a major social disruption and social explosion. Even if we are to do that, we will be creating a large unemployed and perhaps unemployable sector’ (Meles cited in The Reporter 2000).

As such, the government frames uncontrolled urban and inter-ethnic migration as the source of ‘economic, political and social instabilities’ (MoFED 2002, p. 56). This fear of migration provides one possible explanation for the rural focus of social policy discourse and the extremely limited

¹⁴ Chapter eleven provides more detailed comparison between the East Asian developmental states and the Ethiopian development strategy.

provision of urban social policy. There are no urban social protection programmes catering for the informal sector, the un- and underemployed, and destitute, such as unemployment benefits or an urban safety net, which might encourage would-be migrants.¹⁵ Concern about migration is also used to justify a state-managed voluntary resettlement programme. This resettlement programme, also part of the FSP, is 'conducted according to a well-conceived plan and with a well-coordinated government support' (MoFED 2002, p. 56), ensuring the productive use of land and labour by expanding labour-intensive agriculture through the resettlement of landless farmers from the highlands to lowlands where land has been labelled by the government as 'underutilized' (New Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia 2003b, p. 1, MoARD 2009, p. 52). This resettlement programme is implemented despite a lack of support from donors, who are mindful of the failures of resettlement under the Derg.

The important state role in ADLI was clearly outlined in the first PRSP and the rural development strategy, yet the second and third PRSPs devote much less attention to state intervention in the economy and land tenure. It can only be assumed that this is to downplay the clash with the neo-liberal underpinnings of the poverty reduction approach. Nevertheless, the latter two do re-affirm the government's ongoing commitment to ADLI.

Despite the framing of the latter PRSPs in terms that are more likely to be agreeable to their donor audience, in the final years of his leadership (1991-2012), Meles became increasingly outspoken in his criticism of neo-liberalism, explicitly proposing a leading role for the state in Ethiopian and African development,

'we in Ethiopia have embarked on a reform programme that is based, not on the neo-liberal paradigm, but on an alternative paradigm of the establishment of a developmental state' (Meles Zenawi 2006).

This strategy explicitly draws on the experience of the East Asian developmental states,

'we are growing like China, like Korea. How did we do it? Like China like Korea - by not swallowing neo-liberal ideals without chewing. We rejected that the government should just be a guard, but also has to play a part filling gaps in the economy when they emerge' (Meles cited in Kirubel 2010).

In doing so, Meles rejected the imposition of neo-liberalism by international organisations,

'Our economic reform programme, which was initiated in conjunction with the IMF and World Bank, started in the early 90s with a focus on changing the command economy, inherited from the past, and establishing a market economy ... we have never been comfortable with it from the very beginning. Our initial reaction was in effect to conduct a rear-guard battle of delaying and preventing the introduction of reforms that would reduce the state to the proverbial night watchman' (Meles Zenawi 2006).

¹⁵ During the 2008 food crisis, the government, supported by donors, provided subsidised food targeted to the poorest, removed VAT on grain and banned cereal exports (Kindie Getnet 2008). However, these measures were temporary and there has been no government attempt to establish a coherent urban social protection strategy.

As such, there is a stark difference between official policy documents designed to ensure the support of Ethiopia's foreign donors, which have selectively presented aspects of the government's development strategy to echo the market-led poverty reduction discourse, and statements made in academic contexts where the Prime Minister openly criticised neo-liberalism and argued for a key state role in social and economic policy. As well as highlighting clear differences between the market-based poverty reduction approach and ADLI's state-led development model, the attack on neo-liberalism by Meles and other EPRDF officials has been used for political purposes. The presentation of a somewhat caricatured neo-liberalism as a foreign imposition allowed Meles to present the EPRDF as the protector of national sovereignty, while also denigrating pro-market opposition parties as the stooges of foreign interests (Bach 2011, Dereje Feyissa 2011).

While ADLI emphasises the importance of smallholder agriculture, it is much less explicit about the extraction of the agricultural surplus required to finance industrialisation in several East Asian countries (Amsden 1979, Byres 1991). Scholars of the East Asian developmental states have emphasised the exploitation of the peasantry required to begin the process of industrial capitalist accumulation, as well as the close links between the state and the industrial capitalist class to whom most of the benefits accrued (Amsden 1979, 1992, Johnson 1982, Deyo 1987, Wade 1990). Should ADLI succeed in its objective of stimulating industry, the main benefits are therefore likely to accrue to urban industrialists. In Ethiopia, industry is dominated by state-owned enterprises and businesses with close links to the ruling party. This latter group of businesses comprises: the MIDROC business empire, owned by Sheik Mohammed Al-Amoudi, one of the richest men in Africa, who enjoys close relations with senior EPRDF officials; and endowment funds controlled by the EPRDF's regional parties (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael 2011). In contrast, the EPRDF is 'critical and suspicious' of the small, independent private sector (Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael 2011, p. 11).

Universal peasant security

A third discourse is framed from the perspective of the peasant and aims to guarantee subsistence through agriculture. A central aspect of this *peasant security* discourse is the definition of land tenure as a social issue. Therefore while the productivist discourse outlines an instrumental rationale for prioritising smallholder agriculture, the peasant security discourse explicitly frames land in terms of the provision of 'social security' to peasants (Meles cited in Marcus 1995, see also Devereux and Guenther 2007). As such, the peasant security discourse is a populist policy that aims to appeal to the peasantry, the TPLF's original base.

In contrast to the neo-liberal approach to property rights, which is exclusively concerned with economic efficiency, the first PRSP argues that, '[t]he question of access to land should ... be addressed from the point of view of both output growth and the welfare of the people' (MoFED 2002, p. 53). In doing so it presents the unrestrained operation of market processes as damaging to peasant security, necessitating state intervention. As such, the peasant security discourse implicitly challenges the neo-liberal concept of 'tenure security', used to describe the security provided by title deeds against arbitrary eviction. According to the peasant security discourse, it is

instead state ownership that provides tenure security, protecting farmers from market risks (Dessalegn Rahmato 2004, Devereux and Guenther 2007, Crewett and Korf 2008).

According to the government, the land policy provides protection for different groups of people. First, for households with good access to agricultural inputs, restrictions on land transfers prevent the eviction of otherwise self-sufficient farmers when they face shocks that lead to indebtedness (Dessalegn Rahmato 2004). State land ownership is therefore based on the paternalistic assumption that the government has to intervene to prevent farmers from making choices that are detrimental to their best interests, because either they lack adequate knowledge or are compelled by economic imperatives (Crewett and Korf 2008). Second, the land policy protects those unable to undertake farm-work, in particular the elderly and households without male labour.¹⁶ By guaranteeing land access, the land policy enables landholders to sharecrop out land and earn an income.

The protection provided by the land policy is in marked contrast to the safety net programmes justified by the poverty reduction discourse. First, the poverty reduction approach limits social policy to the residual of economic policy, whereas the peasant security discourse defines land—usually considered an economic issue—in terms of social objectives. Second, while the poverty reduction approach promotes targeted safety nets, the peasant security discourse is, in principle, universal since, ‘every farmer who wants to make a livelihood from farming is entitled to have a plot of land free of charge’ (MoFED 2002, p. 53). This peasant security discourse was frequently invoked in policy discussions involving Meles Zenawi and was discussed in the first PRSP. Yet it is almost completely absent from the second and third PRSPs, thereby removing important policy issues from the donor agenda.

The peasant security discourse addresses the settled smallholder majority. Policy documents are much less clear, and frequently ambiguous, about the protection provided to rural people pursuing other livelihoods, in particular pastoralism and shifting cultivation in lowland areas. On the one hand pastoralists’ land rights are protected in the Constitution (FDRE 1994, para. 40), and the PRSPs outline programmes to develop water management and livestock services to improve their livelihoods. On the other hand, policy documents repeatedly state that pastoral livelihoods are unsustainable and that there is no long-term alternative to ‘sedentarisation’ (MoFED 2002, p. 72, 2003, 2005),

‘Although a number of short and medium term programs could be designed to deal with problems of the pastoral communities, provisions of the necessary infrastructure for sustained development and radical transformation of their livelihood is a real challenge and long term agenda. Such a development agenda could well be effected only if the people can somehow be settled. Selective settlement programs are believed to be the only viable options in the long run’ (MoFED 2002, p. 72).

Egalitarianism

A final set of discourses frame Ethiopia’s social and economic problems in terms of inequalities that have their roots in Ethiopia’s political and economic history. These egalitarian discourses

¹⁶ In most parts of Ethiopia, women are not expected to plough.

legitimate state intervention to promote equality and thereby correct sources of injustice. Two discourses, those concerning gender and rural-urban equality, fit with the poverty reduction approach and are highlighted in the PRSPs. Meanwhile, two additional egalitarian discourses, focusing on income and ethnic equalities, are largely excluded from the PRSPs but are frequently invoked by the EPRDF in domestic political debates.

Early in its armed struggle, the TPLF acknowledged the systematic discrimination of women in Ethiopian society and placed gender emancipation at the centre of its revolutionary strategy (Medhane Tadesse and Young 2003). While political expediency and confrontation with patriarchal Ethiopian society has challenged its commitment to women (Young 1997), the EPRDF has, nevertheless, introduced a number of reforms to promote *gender equality*. This focus is shared by most of Ethiopia's foreign donors, while gender equality is a key part of the poverty reduction discourse and the specific focus of MDG 3. Most reforms have focused on promoting equal access to the social policies already discussed. For example, federal and regional land proclamations specify that women and men have equal land rights (FDRE 2005a), while land certification requires the registration of households' landholdings to both the husband and wife (Askale Teklu 2005, MoFED 2010). Education and health policies also focus on equitable coverage (MoFED 2010) in order to improve women's economic opportunities. Finally, a Revised Family Code in 2000 required the free consent of both parties to marriage and required property to be split equally on divorce (FDRE 2000).

The rural focus of social policy can be traced to the TPLF's roots in a peasant insurrection and its recognition that socioeconomic development was an essential means of consolidating support among its rural base (Young 1997, Vaughan 2003). Consequently, an additional discourse highlights the need for *rural-urban equality*. According to the first PRSP, 90 per cent of the poor reside in rural areas and have little access to social services (MoFED 2002). Consequently, one of the main considerations of the PRSPs has been to provide equitable access to health, education and drinking water (MoFED 2002, p. 44). These priorities mirror those of most donors and the MDGs, which aim for rural equality in social service provision (MDGs 2 and 5).

Gender and rural-urban egalitarian discourses are relatively non-controversial since, in principle, they are the subject of consensus between the government and its foreign donors. The remainder of this section focuses on two other egalitarian discourses in more depth, examining first income equality and then ethnic equality. Subsequent chapters do, however, return to the issues of gender and rural-urban equality in social policy implementation.

Income equality and class homogeneity

As recognised in the first PRSP, ADLI is 'a strategy explicitly designed to change the distribution of the gains from growth. Growth with equity is the optimal strategy for Ethiopia' (MoFED 2002, p. 26). Defining equity as a specific objective legitimates state interventions well beyond the limited role envisaged by the poverty reduction approach. Indeed, state land ownership has also been justified in terms of 'social equity' and the prevention of class differentiation (Dessalegn Rahmato 2004, p. 10, Devereux *et al.* 2005, Devereux and Guenther 2007). Like the Derg, the EPRDF regularly voices fears that privatisation would lead to the re-emergence of wealthy landowners

and exploitative feudal or capitalist labour relations (Meles Zenawi 2006), playing on smallholders' concerns about displacement,

'By fully privatizing land ownership, one starts the process of differentiation. The creative, vigorous peasant farmer gets to own larger pieces of land and the less effective get to be left to live in doubt ... We do not believe this is the right approach in our country ... It is simply assumed that those who would buy land would be the very ones who would use it best. We do not know of any logic or evidence to prove that' (Meles cited in The Reporter 2000).

In this view, class differentiation is intrinsically negative, leading to exploitation. This egalitarian discourse allowed Meles to justify the possibility of state land redistribution,

'while on one hand giving the peasant farmer permanent access to this land, we are also reserving the right of the government to redistribute land if necessary' (Meles cited in The Reporter 2000).

While class homogeneity is compatible with the peasant security and productivist discourses, it conflicts with the neo-liberal poverty reduction approach. Private property rights are central to neo-liberalism, according to which the market is the only efficient means of allocating resources, and state intervention is dismissed as market distorting and inefficient. As a result, income inequality was entirely absent from the MDGs, which focus on addressing absolute rather than relative poverty, implying that the wealth of the rich is independent from the poverty of the poor (Saith 2006). Subsequently, several donor organisations have begun to promote equality as a specific objective. However, they are in favour of *equality of opportunity* (World Bank 2006), for example, legitimating the focus on equitable access to education, rather than a role for the state in redistributing incomes to ensure *equality of outcomes*. Unsurprisingly, Meles' comments regarding the prevention of class differentiation are not replicated in any of the PRSPs. Although equity was explicitly mentioned as an objective several times in the first PRSP, there is no mention of redistribution in the following two PRSPs.

The class implications of the government's land policy are also central to its claims of democratisation. The form of democracy advocated by the EPRDF is not the liberal democracy common in the west, but 'revolutionary democracy'. The EPRDF's support for revolutionary democracy is influenced by its experience mobilising support in Tigray. In particular, '[f]ollowing land reform and other "levelling" measures conducted by the front [TPLF], the peasantry was considered to be a "homogeneous mass" with common needs, interests and outlook' (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, p. 117). As such, pluralism, central to liberal democracy, is considered irrelevant. Instead, revolutionary democracy is 'based on *communal collective* participation, and representation based on consensus' (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, p. 116, emphasis in original). While the vanguard party leads debate, once consensus is achieved the community is expected to speak with one voice, with dissent considered irrelevant. Consequently, criticism of government policy and the proposal of alternatives are considered a confrontation with the party, rather than an opportunity for dialogue. Thus, revolutionary democracy produces a discourse that resonates with the democratic rhetoric of foreign donors, utilising terms such as decentralisation,

participation and inclusion (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). Nevertheless, each of these takes on a very different meaning in the Ethiopian context (Williamson 2011).

Ethnic equality

Ethnic federalism is justified by the EPRDF through recourse to a discourse of ethnic equality. The EPRDF believes that past conflicts were driven by inequality in access to political office and economic opportunities between ethnic groups, in particular pointing to Amhara domination during the Imperial and *Derg* administrations. Consequently, EPRDF policy has attempted to correct ethnic inequalities by providing for self-rule by ethnic groups and the administration of group resources in the interest of the ethnic group,

‘the ethnic basis of Ethiopia’s democracy stemmed from the government’s fight against poverty and the need for an equitable distribution of the nation’s wealth’
(Meles cited in Marcus 1995).

This emphasis on ethnic equality and autonomy is shared, in particular, by the rural populations of Oromiya and Tigray who resent what they perceive to be past and present exploitation of their ethnic groups.

The defeat of the *Derg* by a loose coalition of ethnic movements made some form of ethnic autonomy in post-*Derg* Ethiopia inevitable (Joireman 1997, Vaughan 2003). The option pursued was influenced by the TPLF’s successes in Tigray, which showed that a community can be mobilised more effectively for the purposes of revolutionary democracy ‘from within’ with leaders from their own ethnic group and in their own language (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, p. 15). Nevertheless, in line with a primordial interpretation of ethnicity, ethnic groups are identified based on purportedly objectively identifiable characteristics, in particular language.

The federal government, which controls major revenues including most foreign aid and trade taxes, is responsible for distributing resources between the ethnically-defined regions using a formula based on population, level of development and revenue mobilisation capacity (Tegegne Gebre-Igziabher 2007). The redistributive role is recognised in the second PRSP, although redistribution is discussed in regional, rather than explicitly ethnic, terms,

‘the fiscal transfer to regional governments will continue to be effected through a credible and transparent budget subsidy formula, and this will take into account criteria for equity and efficiency’ (MoFED 2005, p. 62).

The ethnic equality discourse also raises questions regarding the place of ethnicity in land administration. Previously discussed discourses outline class-based justifications for state land ownership. In contrast, the ethnic equality discourse posits the self-administration of an ethnic group’s resources—including land—as a key requirement of equality within a multi-ethnic Ethiopia. Ethnic federalism associates an ethnic group with a given territory, even permitting secession, the ultimate expression of ethnic land ownership (Endrias Eshete 2003). Consequently, the class and ethnic discourses contradict one another regarding the rights of minorities outside their home region. The logical extrapolation of the ethnic equality discourse is that each ethnic group has its own home region and, consequently, outsiders in that region have a weaker claim to

land than indigenous inhabitants. This discourse resonates with communal land tenure and potentially politicises ethnicity and space.

Competing visions of development, agrarian change and the role of social policy

These discourses imply very different visions of the process of agrarian transformation, the role of the state in the economy and the nature of social policy. The PRSPs, in particular the latter two, imply a market-led development strategy with a residual approach to state social policy, in line with the donor-driven poverty reduction agenda. According to neo-liberalism, land is considered solely an economic issue, with private property rights prioritised to promote investment and to facilitate land transfers, allowing the most efficient farmers to expand (Joireman 1995). In the long-term such a market-led development strategy would be expected to result in a capitalist agrarian transformation, whereby the most efficient farmers consolidate their landholdings, while less effective farmers are displaced and seek employment as agricultural labourers or in non-farm sectors. Social policy, meanwhile, provides investment in 'human capital' and limited protection for the poorest.

The productivist, peasant security and class homogeneity discourses are broadly compatible with one another and justify a state-led development strategy which integrates social and economic objectives, and which constitutes a very different vision of development to neo-liberalism. They require the state to play a leading role in development and agrarian transformation, protecting the peasant sector and promoting agricultural intensification through the supply of improved inputs, resulting in primary accumulation by the smallholder sector to finance industrialisation. To this end, individual property rights are constrained, and, in restricting the market for land, this policy in effect also restricts the market for labour, which is a pre-requisite for a market society (Polanyi 2001, Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b). The government has selectively presented this state-led strategy in the PRSPs in order to reassure donors by highlighting the areas that overlap with the neo-liberal poverty reduction approach, while minimising the conflicts. Nonetheless, the underlying assumptions of these state-led and neo-liberal models differ considerably regarding the role of the state, the nature of property rights and the class basis of agrarian transformation.

Meanwhile, the ethnic equality discourse presents a rationale for social policy intervention, which is in tension with both neo-liberalism and ADLI. Neo-liberalism prioritises individual rights based on the assumption that unconstrained, utility maximising individuals acting in a free market will maximise group welfare. In contrast, ADLI argues that the state should intervene in the economy to promote the 'national interest' and protect the dominant class—the peasantry. Finally, the ethnic equality discourse prioritises the interests of ethnic groups over those of the individual and the country.

Furthermore, each social policy discourse has very different implications for the relationship between the state and its citizens. In principle, the poverty reduction discourse prioritises individual rights, while the productivist discourse views people as 'human capital'—a resource to be allocated by the state—rather than active agents making choices in their own best interests. Meanwhile, state paternalism is an important part of both the poverty reduction and peasant security discourses. These discourses argue that, if left to their own devices, people will make

decisions contrary to their own long-term interests, justifying the expansion of state control over its citizens. Finally, the egalitarian discourses provide the rationale for limiting individual choice in the interests of the group—class, gender or ethnicity. As discussed, the emphasis on class homogeneity is seen as a means of ensuring representation under revolutionary democracy, while, in the case of the ethnic inequality discourse, the implication is that both class and individual interests are subordinated to those of the ethnic group.

This discussion serves to highlight the centrality of land tenure to the analysis of social policy and politics in Ethiopia. Consequently, land tenure is selected as the main focus of this thesis, not as *a case of Ethiopian social policy*, but *the central case* which lies at the heart of the tensions between the various social policy discourses. To illustrate these tensions and to serve as the basis of subsequent analysis, table 4.1 sets out the policy implications of the four main discourses on land—the private property discourse, peasant security, class homogeneity and ethnic equality.

Conclusion

The discourse analysis of government policy documents and statements by senior officials has revealed competing visions of social policy and development. The dominant discourse in the PRSPs is the market-led poverty reduction approach supported by most donors, according to which state social policy is limited to the provision of basic social services and targeted social protection. Minimised in the PRSPs but dominant in domestic political debates are discourses which draw inspiration from the East Asian developmental states and which envisage a major state role in coordinating the economy, with social policy intervention used to ensure the productive use of labour, land and capital, to prevent agrarian class differentiation and to protect the peasantry. While some past research has noted the egalitarian or protective logics which underpin government policy (e.g. Devereux and Guenther 2007, Crewett and Korf 2008), the analysis in this chapter goes further in specifying in much greater detail the socioeconomic and political implications of these discourses, as well as highlighting the tensions between them.

The analysis also points to some of the political interests underlying these social policy discourses, highlighting cleavages in domestic society. In particular, the origins of the EPRDF in a peasant insurrection and the continuing importance of this political base are reflected in the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses, which play on smallholders' fear of displacement. Nevertheless, the productivist discourse, which underpins ADLI's state-led development strategy, aims to exploit the agricultural sector to stimulate industrialisation to the likely benefit of urban capitalists with links to the ruling party. The ethnic equality discourse, meanwhile, particularly resonates with the EPRDF's base in rural Tigray, and ethnic nationalists in rural Oromiya.¹⁷ Nevertheless, in strategies produced for Ethiopia's foreign donors, these policies are selectively presented to echo the neo-liberal poverty reduction discourse in order to secure continuing donor support.

¹⁷ This is not to say that Oromo nationalists support the EPRDF, but that they tend to agree with the principle of ethno-regional autonomy and ethnic egalitarian rhetoric.

Finally, each social policy discourse has very different implications for state-society relations. As such, land is not only central to the government's social and economic objectives but is also a key factor in political development. Consequently, the land issue cannot be dismissed as just another policy issue, subordinate to the need for democratisation. Rather, changes to land policy involve fundamental changes in the nature of state-society relations and the distribution of power in society.

Table 4.1. Policy indicators of discourses on land

	Private property	Peasant security	Class homogeneity	Ethnic equality
Land access and transfer				
Basis for obtaining land	Market transactions	Willingness to farm	Equal share	Indigeneity
Buy/sell land	Yes	No	No	No
Rent out land	Yes	Yes	No	To other members
Inherit land	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Land management				
Borrow against land	Yes	No	No	No
Hired labour allowed	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Non-residence allowed	Yes	Yes	No	No
Restrictions on use	No	Used for agriculture	Used for agriculture	Used for agriculture
Restrictions on holding				
Max. land size	No	Subject to availability	Limits on inequality	Subject to availability
Land redistribution	No	No	By state	By community
Time limit	No	No	Yes	No

5

From social policy discourse to policy choices: The challenge of integrating social and economic objectives

This chapter has two main objectives. First, it contributes to the first research question: *how are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?* Building on chapter four, it examines the division of responsibilities between federal and regional governments, and the influence of competing discourses in policy statements and laws. The chapter also examines policy formulation related to agricultural investment, which federal and regional governments have strongly promoted in recent years despite the apparent tension between large-scale agricultural investment and the social objectives of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI).

Second, in order to examine the links between the smallholder and investment sectors, the chapter assesses the macro outcomes of the government's social policy and development strategies. This analysis concerns ADLI's impact on agricultural productivity, industrial expansion and food security. The chapter also constitutes the first research to analyse empirical data regarding the economic role of agricultural investments in Ethiopia. This analysis emphasises the export-oriented nature of investments, constituting a shift in the development strategy towards a greater focus on international trade.

The analysis draws on data generated during fieldwork, in particular: key informant interviews with federal and regional government officials, and donor representatives; and a unique set of federal and regional databases that document agricultural investments. The analysis also examines legal proclamations and policy documents issued by federal and regional governments; and official statistics produced by the Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency (CSA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Following this introduction, the chapter first examines the evolution of land policy and variation between regional policies. The following sections examine government initiatives to expand the

use of improved inputs, key complements to the social objectives of the land policy, and to assess the performance of the agricultural sector. The chapter then shows how the failings of the smallholder sector and international crises leading to increased demand for agricultural land have prompted the government to promote large-scale foreign and domestic agricultural investment. The final section concludes.

Competing discourses on land and the evolution of land tenure

ADLI is based on the assumption that labour-intensive smallholder agriculture, complemented with improved inputs, can raise productivity and create a large agricultural surplus. As such, the strategy requires a land tenure system which prioritises smallholder agriculture while maintaining farmers' production incentives. This section examines the evolution of federal and regional land policies, and the changing influence of the four discourses on land—private property, peasant security, class homogeneity and ethnic equality—based on analysis of land proclamations and key informant interviews. The analysis assesses this changing influence by drawing on the policy indicators of these discourses, identified in chapter four (table 4.1).

When the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power in 1991, it inherited the *Derg's* land tenure system, which was strongly influenced by an egalitarian discourse and ensured the domination of a relatively homogeneous class of smallholders. Although many collective farms had been disbanded shortly before the *Derg* lost power, land remained state property, the sale and cash rental of land was banned, as was wage labour. In addition, there was a limit of 10 hectares per household and land redistributions were conducted regularly to reflect changing household sizes (PDRE 1975).

In the early 1990s, the World Bank, which was negotiating structural adjustment reforms with the new government, tried to convince the EPRDF to privatise land (respondents FD4 and FD5, see appendix B). Nevertheless, the government retained state ownership and the prohibition on land sales, a decision confirmed in the new constitution (FDRE 1994). Debate with donors was effectively closed when former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi stated that privatisation would only take place 'over the EPRDF's dead body' (cited in Devereux *et al.* 2005, p. 122). Since that time most donors have neglected the land issue, while the Swedish government and the United States' Agency for International Development (USAID) have focused on incremental policy changes, rather than wholesale privatisation. One USAID official said that their objective was to achieve 'policy by stealth', promoting land certification and rental to achieve a land policy, which would be functionally equivalent to privatisation (respondent FD3).

The land question became an important feature of the 2005 and 2010 elections, including the televised electoral debates. On the one hand, the EPRDF, drawing on the peasant security discourse, played on fears of displacement and presented itself as the guardian of the peasantry. On the other hand, the main opposition at the 2005 elections, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), and its 2010 successor, the Unity for Justice and Democracy (UJD), which draw support from urban areas and Amhara region (Arriola 2008), utilised neo-liberal arguments to

promote land privatisation. EPRDF electoral victories and the party's domination of parliament,¹⁸ however, mean there is little opposition influence over policymaking. Indeed, while Ethiopia's federal structure and the formal division of power between the Prime Minister and the legislature imply considerable dispersal of political power, in practice, decision making on land and other issues is extremely centralised within the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) due to the party's domination of the parliament, the centralised party structure, and the EPRDF's control of all regional governments through affiliated parties (Aalen 2002, Meheret Ayenew 2002, Endrias Eshete 2003, Dessalegn Rahmato 2009).

When the EPRDF came to power, agricultural production had been severely damaged by conflict, a lack of technology, and collective agriculture and frequent land redistributions, which reduced farmers' incentives. While state ownership was retained, the EPRDF initiated several reforms to increase agricultural production. First, the ban on wage labour was revoked, the ceiling on landholdings was removed and some rental was permitted, although restrictions remained since long-term rental, like land sales, was thought to threaten smallholder displacement (FDRE 1997). Meanwhile, under the EPRDF there has been no federal requirement to redistribute land and the latest federal proclamation, issued in 2005, required all regions to register individual landholdings (FDRE 2005a). According to the head of the federal Land Administration and Land Use Department, these modifications aim to provide landholders with more secure access to particular landholdings to increase production incentives and promote an efficient land rental market (Solomon Abebe 2006, n.d.).

Reforms have therefore changed the balance of discourses in the federal proclamations. The influence of the class homogeneity discourse has weakened, while the peasant security discourse remains strong, with ongoing prohibitions on sale and mortgage, as well as rental restrictions. Although the present proclamation falls far short of full private property rights, land registration has reinforced the individualisation of tenure and gone some way to promote market-based allocation through rental.

According to the government's ethnic equality discourse, land is one of the principal ethnic resources. Consequently land administration is devolved to regional governments (FDRE 1994, para. 52). The four 'established' regions where smallholder agriculture is the main livelihood—Amhara, Oromiya, Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) and Tigray—have all produced land proclamations, while the four 'emerging' regions—Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella and Somali—have yet to do so. Since their creation under the EPRDF, these latter four had considerably weaker capacity and, given that dominant livelihoods include pastoralism and shifting cultivation, local realities are harder to reconcile with the federal land policy, which is formulated from the perspective of smallholder agriculture. The importance of state ownership to ADLI means that the land proclamations of the four established regions are formulated within the federal framework, leaving limited space for regional variation. There are, nevertheless, a few notable differences between regions (see table 5.1).

¹⁸ According to official results, contested by opposition parties, the CUD won 109 of 546 seats and the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF), which supports state land ownership, won 52 seats in 2005. Non-EPRDF candidates won just two seats in 2010.

Table 5.1. Summary of the current federal and regional land proclamations

	Federal (456/2005)	Amhara (133/2006)	Oromiya (130/2007)	SNNPR (110/2007)	Tigray (97/1998 EC)
Land access and transfer					
Buy/sell land	No	No	No	No	No
Rent out land	As long as it does not displace landholder	Up to 25 years	Up to half for 3 years for traditional or 15 for mechanised	As long as it does not displace landholder	Up to half for 2 years for traditional or 15 for 'modern'
Inherit land	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Land management					
Borrow against land	Only investors	Only investors	Only investors	Only investors	No
Hired labour allowed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-residence allowed	No	Yes	No	No	No
Restrictions on use	Must be cultivated	Must be cultivated	Must be cultivated	Must be cultivated	Must be cultivated
Restrictions on holding					
Max. land size	No	No	0.5ha of irrigated land	0.5ha of irrigated land with govt infrastructure	2ha
Land redistribution	Based on wish of the farmers	If requested by 80% of kebele	Only irrigated land	No, only govt constructed irrigation	No
Time limit	No	No	No	No	No

Sources: FDRE (2005a), ANRS (2006), ONRG (2007), SNNPRS (2007), TNRG (1998 EC).

Tigray's land proclamation is the most influenced by the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses, justifying far-reaching state intervention. Tigray is the only region to stipulate that landholders absent from their *tabiya*¹⁹ for more than two years will have their land confiscated and given to the landless (TNRG 1998 Ethiopian Calendar (EC)²⁰). Senior officials in Tigray's Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use Agency (EPLAUA) justify this policy based on the peasant security discourse, claiming that it plays a role in 'protecting' farmers from migration (respondent IR3) and limiting urban unemployment (respondent IR1),

'even now landless people are coming to urban areas, there is limited urban infrastructure and capacity so removing the restrictions [on land transactions] would increase unemployment. These people have knowledge and experience of rural areas, he doesn't have knowledge of urban life and poverty reduction. So this policy is to keep the farmer working in the rural area' (respondent IR1).

In line with the class homogeneity discourse, Tigray is also the only region to specify a maximum landholding size—just two hectares. Nevertheless, Tigray was the first region to register land in 1998 (Solomon Abebe 2006), and the proclamation prohibits future redistributions. Consequently, despite providing the greatest rationale for state intervention in land tenure, Tigray has made steps towards protecting individual property rights.

Amhara, in 1997, is the only region to have redistributed land under the EPRDF, ostensibly to ensure a more egalitarian distribution. Nevertheless, the latest Amhara proclamation (ANRS 2006) is actually the closest of the regional proclamations to the private property discourse. As well as limiting redistribution and initiating land registration, the Amhara Bureau of Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use (BoEPLAU) is exceptional in the degree to which it has moved away from the peasant security discourse and its justifications for state intervention. The latest proclamation states that landholders can rent out all their land for up to 25 years and retain land if they move away from the *kebele*. Senior BoEPLAU officials justify this change based on neo-liberal arguments, since it promotes a rental market, encouraging labour mobility (Bayeh Tiruneh 2009) and urban migration to reduce 'population stress' on the land (respondent AR2), as well as enabling the consolidation of landholdings into medium-sized farms for which technology adoption is economic (respondent AR1).

As discussed in chapter four, the peasant security discourse justifies state intervention to restrict individual choice based on the threat posed by market forces, implying that peasants are unable to make choices in their own best interests. In contrast, BoEPLAU officials consider landholders to be 'rational' and claim to use the land proclamation to expand farmers' choices, including the option to rent out land and move to urban areas,

'When someone rents out land they are rational ... Rental gives an opportunity for labour mobility and for people to take employment opportunities. It [rental] is a fear of other regions but we have faced no problems' (respondent AR1).

¹⁹ The lowest level of government administration in Tigray, equivalent to the *kebele* in other regions.

²⁰ The Ethiopian calendar is seven years and four months behind the Gregorian calendar.

Although land sales remain prohibited, the Amhara policy is much closer to the private property discourse than the peasant security or class homogeneity discourses, and is basically in line with latest World Bank policy (Deininger and Binswanger 1999). As such, the Amhara proclamation goes beyond federal policy, which limits rental to an amount of land that does not displace the holder (FDRE 2005a, para. 8[1]). This is unusual as the Amhara government is usually thought to closely follow federal policy to avoid being seen as a threat to the federal government.²¹

Between the extremes of Tigray and Amhara lie SNNPR, whose proclamation closely follows that of the federal government (SNNPRS 2007), and Oromiya. Oromiya was the first region to announce a moratorium on land redistributions and previous proclamations permitted landholders to retain land when they left the *kebele* (ONRG 2002, 2003). However, in line with federal restrictions, this is prohibited by the current proclamation (ONRG 2007, respondent OR1). Oromiya also has one of the most restrictive rental policies, limiting rental to a maximum of half a farmer's landholding. According to a senior official in the Bureau of Land and Environmental Protection (BLEP), this is because Oromiya has been the region most targeted by agricultural investors and, following the peasant security discourse, the state should protect farmers from renting to investors for long periods and losing land access (respondent OR1).

Despite the implications of ethnic federalism for land administration, none of the regional proclamations explicitly refers to ethnicity. Each of the proclamations does, however, allocate a limited role to community elders in dispute resolution. This could offer one means by which customary institutions could influence land administration, including the possibility that ethnic affiliation could become an important factor in land administration. The role of elders is therefore an important part of the case studies analysed in part three of the thesis. The EPRDF's approach to ethnicity in land administration is indicative of its ambiguous approach to ethnic federalism in general. By creating regional governments to administer ethnic resources and territory, the government has created the expectation that land belongs first and foremost to the ethnic group that is indigenous to the region. Nevertheless, the land proclamations all focus on class criteria—a willingness to farm the land.

The supply and utilisation of improved inputs

Government policies that promote productivity-enhancing agricultural inputs and provide incentives for farmers to increase production constitute key complements to the use of land for social objectives. This section examines policies related to the agricultural supply system and the market for crops, relying on analysis of official statistics and the existing literature.

Agricultural input supply

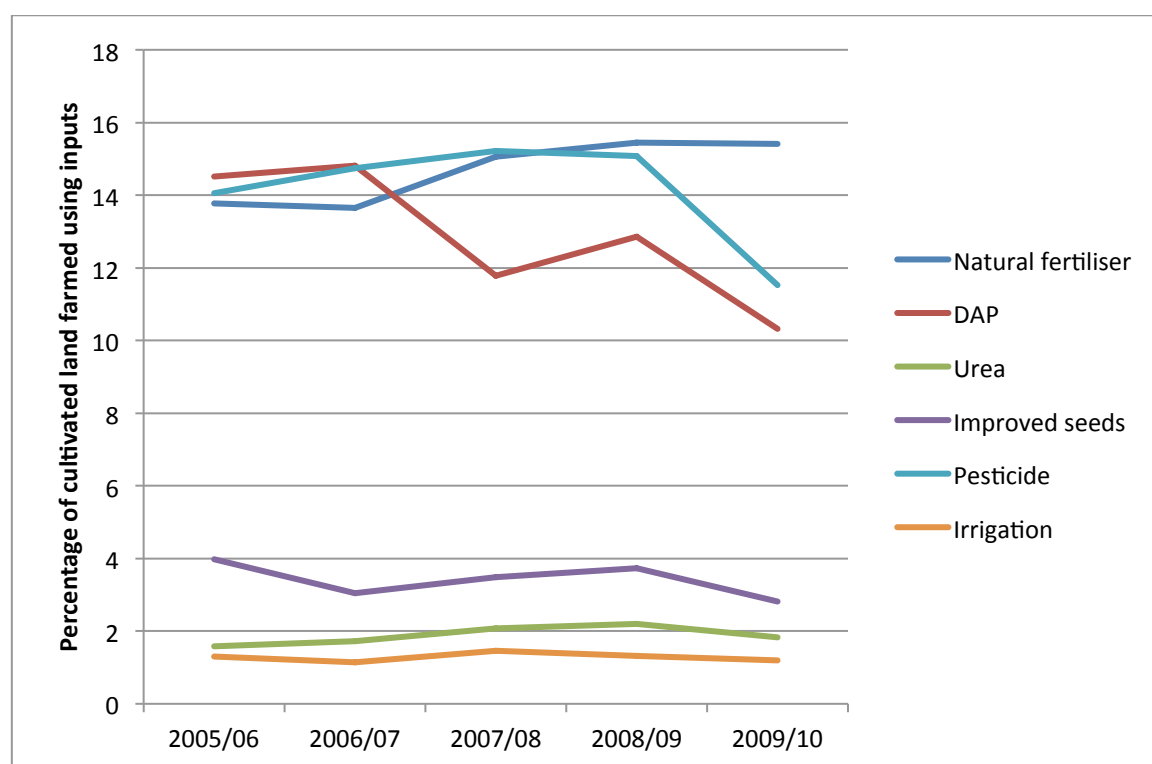
Numerous federal government initiatives have attempted to increase the use of improved inputs. In the 1990s, a pilot of the Sasakawa Global 2000 initiative (SG-2000) tested packages of fertiliser and improved seeds in high potential sites and achieved large yield increases for sorghum and

²¹ My research was unable to identify the reason for this exceptionality. One possibility may be the long-term engagement of the Swedish development agency with the Amhara land administration. Alternatively, the change may be a reaction to the uncertainty resulting from the 1997 Amhara land redistribution.

maize (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009, Spielman *et al.* 2010). This pilot greatly influenced the government, leading to national programmes such as the Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System (PADETES) and the National Agricultural Extension Intervention Programme (NAEIP) which provided inputs on credit to smallholders (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009). In addition, there has been a major drive to increase the number of Development Agents (DAs) providing advice and training to farmers. The government has trained 50,000 DAs since 2004 and ultimately aims to have three DAs in each *kebele* (Spielman 2008). The government is also building Farmer Training Centres (FTCs) where DAs can teach on demonstration plots.

Nevertheless, use of improved inputs remains low (see figure 5.1). In 2009/10, just 4 per cent of cultivated land was farmed using improved seeds, 12 per cent using chemical and 15 per cent natural fertiliser, and 1 per cent using irrigation. Furthermore, studies suggest that individual inputs raise productivity little, with the greatest yields possible only when improved seeds, fertiliser and irrigation are used together (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009).

Figure 5.1. Use of improved inputs



Source: CSA ASS

Ethiopian state investment in irrigation has been described by one commentator as ‘trivial’ (Beyene 2008 cited in Chang 2009). In addition, studies estimating the total irrigable area in Ethiopia suggest that there is relatively limited potential. Seleshi *et al.* (2007) conclude that 3.8 million hectares, the equivalent of less than 30 per cent of the currently cultivated area, could be irrigated. Moreover, much of this irrigable land is not situated in the smallholder areas already under cultivation, which are central to ADLI’s success, but in sparsely-populated lowland areas close to major rivers.

The improved seed production and distribution system is almost entirely controlled by state organisations, reflecting the ‘fractious’ relations between the EPRDF and private sector (Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael 2011, p. 11). The Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) is responsible for the development of new seed varieties and distribution of breeder seeds, while the Ethiopian Seed Enterprise (ESE) is responsible for most seed production. Approximately 30 private companies are licensed to produce seeds, but only a handful are active and work mainly as ESE contractors (Dawit Alemu 2010, Spielman *et al.* 2010). Seeds are distributed through regional agricultural bureaux, cooperative unions at the zonal level and producers’ cooperatives at *wereda* level (Dawit Alemu 2010).²² The role of private companies is limited to a small market share by an inability to compete with subsidised ESE prices and the challenge of developing a distribution network to rival the cooperatives (Spielman 2008, Dawit Alemu 2010, Spielman *et al.* 2010). According to one estimate, total seed supply met just 27 per cent of demand in 2005 (Dawit Alemu 2010).

Similar problems affect fertiliser supply. Structural adjustment reforms opened the sector to private investment in the mid-1990s. Nevertheless, state regulations, in particular limitations on foreign exchange allocations for importers and the requirement to import fertiliser in quantities of 25,000 tons (the equivalent of \$5m, Spielman *et al.* 2010), led to the exit of most companies and the return to a near state monopoly (Jayne *et al.* 2002, 2003, Spielman *et al.* 2010). Despite ADLI’s goal of stimulating industrialisation through demand for agricultural inputs, there remains no domestic fertiliser production. The third Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) aims to establish one fertiliser factory (MoFED 2010), but for now agriculture remains dependent on imports. In recent years, the nominal fertiliser price has increased rapidly in line with oil prices, doubling between 2007 and 2008 (Kindie Getnet 2008). Meanwhile, recent devaluation of the *birr*,²³ intended to increase export competitiveness, will further increase the fertiliser prices and is likely to reduce usage.

Given the importance of improved inputs to ADLI’s success, the government’s failure to prioritise the supply of inputs is rather surprising. In part this failure is simply due to the shortage of resources. According to one senior government official,

‘small-scale farmers are not producing the quality they should, because they don’t have the technology ... There are 12 million households in Ethiopia. We can’t afford to give new technology to all of them’ (Esayas Kebede, head of the Agricultural Investment Support Directorate, cited in Malone and Cropley 2009).

Among the factors constraining the government are the priorities of its foreign donors. Figure 5.2 shows how the sectoral allocation of aid from multilateral and bilateral donors has shifted, with support to industry and agriculture as a proportion of total aid in long-term decline.²⁴ Based on

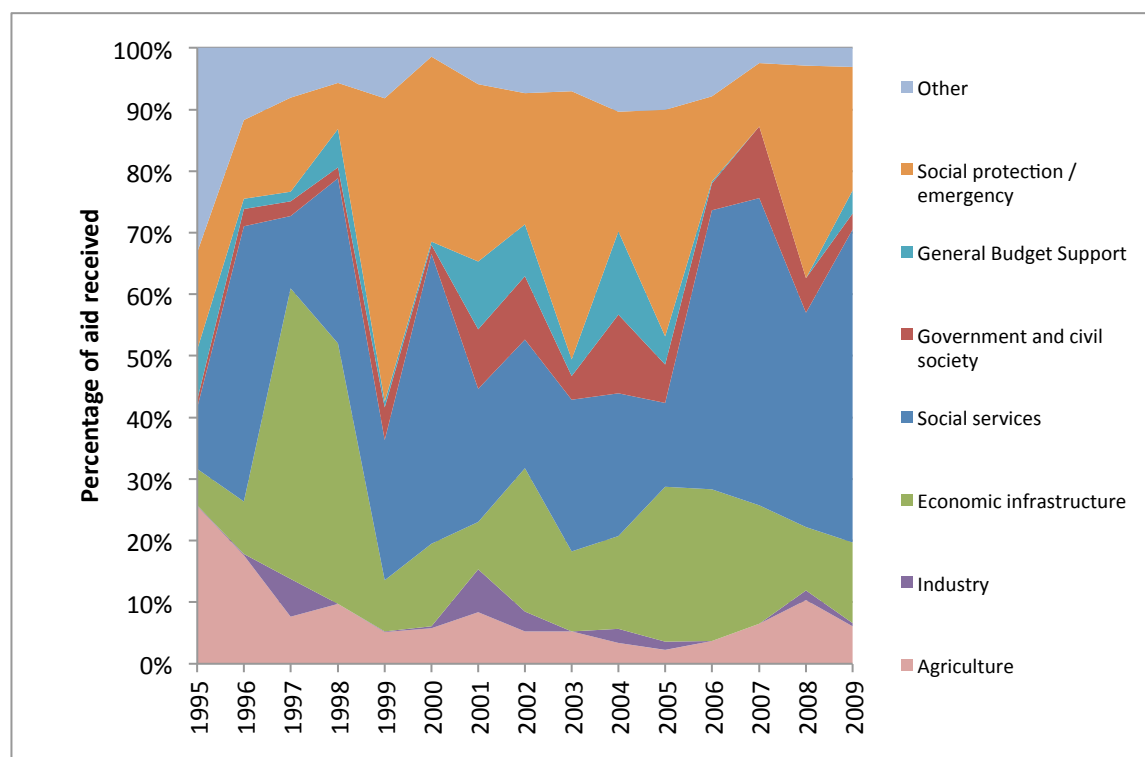
²² Though technically autonomous, cooperatives were established by the government and retain close government links.

²³ The *birr* was devalued by 20 per cent overnight in September 2010 with the result that £1 was worth approximately 25 *birr*.

²⁴ While the proportion of aid going to the agricultural sector has fallen, the amount of aid provided to the sector has ebbed and flowed since the 1980s, with no clear trend. However, given that most OECD donors provided little support to Ethiopia during the *Derg* (1974-91) due to its Marxist orientation (Furtado and

the neo-liberal assumptions of the poverty reduction approach, support to these sectors is considered market distorting, and aid has instead been directed towards social services, social protection and humanitarian assistance. Given that aid from OECD donors constitutes approximately 20 per cent of government expenditure, donor priorities constitute an important constraint on the government's ability to invest in agriculture.

Figure 5.2. Sectoral allocation of aid to Ethiopia



Source: OECD

Output markets

To raise agricultural productivity, it is also necessarily to provide farmers with incentives to adopt new technologies. As such, infrastructure connecting farmers to markets and price incentives are important factors influencing take up. Ethiopia is a landlocked country, which relies on access to the port in Djibouti for the vast majority of its trade due to poor relations with Eritrea and political instability in Somalia. Despite considerable investment in the road network under the EPRDF, transport infrastructure remains limited. Consequently, transaction costs are extremely high and in most respects, the grain market resembles a closed economy (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009), with many local markets segregated (Ulimwengu *et al.* 2009). Since the EPRDF withdrew from a stabilisation role in cereal markets following structural adjustment (Eleni Z. Gabre-Madhin and Goggin 2005), producer prices are largely the result of local supply and demand.

This grain market is extremely volatile since producers rely on inconsistent rainfall and, with one of the smallest urban populations in the world, there is insufficient demand to absorb increased production when harvests are good (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009). This volatility has damaged

Smith 2009), the failure to increase agricultural funding when total aid has increased rapidly under the EPRDF indicates its low priority.

farmers' ability to repay credit for agricultural inputs and their incentives to adopt new technology (Spielman 2008, Spielman *et al.* 2010). Partly in response to these problems, in 2008 the federal government established the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX). Although the ECX initially traded only coffee and sesame, the government plans to use the system to trade all cereals. The ECX aims to find an institutional, market-based solution to agricultural problems (Eleni Z. Gabre-Madhin and Goggin 2005). The intention is that establishing an independent crop certification system will increase trust between buyers and sellers, and reduce transaction costs. Improved warehousing and greater market integration are expected to smooth price fluctuations in crop markets. Finally, electronic notice-boards in provincial towns notify producers of prices in Addis Ababa, enabling farmers to negotiate a fair price with traders, providing incentives to invest in production.

The impact of ADLI and the Food Security Programme (FSP)

Under the EPRDF almost every social and economic indicator has improved compared to the final years of the *Derg*. The end of civil conflict, compulsory crop purchases and collective agriculture, as well as increased investment in infrastructure and social protection policies have all had important impacts. Indeed, the PRSPs present an extremely positive picture of recent economic performance. As shown in table 5.2, GDP growth has been rapid, at 11 per cent per annum from 2005 to 2009, making Ethiopia one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Furthermore, the poverty headcount, based on a national poverty line, has reduced from 45.5 per cent in 1995/96 to 29.2 per cent in 2009/10, while the food poverty headcount decreased from 49.5 to 28.2 per cent during the same period.

Nevertheless, this rapid economic growth has been achieved relative to an extremely low starting point. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world and in 1991, when the EPRDF came to power, the economy was in a state of collapse. The true success of ADLI must therefore be evaluated against its own lofty objectives, rather than past economic performance. This section uses official statistics and the existing literature to assess the macro impacts of ADLI and the Food Security Programme (FSP), focusing on the key role of smallholder agriculture in stimulating industrial growth and eliminating food insecurity.

Table 5.2. Average annual growth rates by sector

	SDPRP (2001-05)	PASDEP (2005-10)	% of GDP in 2010
Agriculture	4.3	8.4	41.6
Industry	7.4	10.0	12.9
Services	5.0	14.6	45.5
<i>Total GDP</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>11.0</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: MoFED (2005, 2010).

The contribution of agriculture to industrialisation

The land policies previously discussed have ensured that in 2010, 11.5 million of the 11.8 million hectares used for grain production were farmed by smallholders (CSA 2010a) who were responsible for 95 per cent of agricultural production (CSA 2009a). Meanwhile, CSA data show an

88 per cent increase in total cereal production (see figure 5.3) and 133 per cent increase in pulse production between 1996 and 2010. While impressive, however, ADLI's rationale is not only based on a substantial increase in agricultural production but also the contribution of agriculture to industrialisation through forward and backward production linkages, and increased entitlements of food insecure households. To assess these contributions, I follow Crouch and de Janvry (1980) who analyse the roles of different crops in the process of accumulation. Crouch and de Janvry distinguish between: *peasant foods*—produced for self-consumption; *wage foods*—produced for the market and consumed by wage labourers; *industrial inputs*; and *export crops*. In addition to these, the emerging importance of *bio-fuel feed crops* warrants an extra category given the particular characteristics of the energy sector.

ADLI suggests two forward production linkages: an increase in the marketed surplus of wage foods to reduce the living wage for the urban labour force; and the production of industrial crops for processing. Concerning the first, figures 5.4 and 5.5 show that a large amount of the increase in production derives from *extensification*—bringing more land under cultivation—rather than the *intensification*. Although there has been a yield increase compared to the crop failures of 2002/03, the yields achieved in recent years are only slightly higher than those reported in the early 1980s.²⁵ Consequently, while the expansion of the area under smallholder cultivation may have provided more farmers with subsistence, the limited yield increase is one reason why increased agricultural production has not yet generated a large surplus. Table 5.3 shows the low marketed surpluses of most crops, with the vast majority used for self-consumption. The main staples for smallholders are maize, sorghum, wheat, *teff*, *enset* and pulses and these are classified as 'peasant' foods for the purposes of subsequent analysis. The small surplus feeds the urban population, with the result that there is no clear distinction between 'peasant' and 'wage' foods. Meat, meanwhile, is classified as a 'wage' food, reflecting its importance in urban diets and the fact that it is beyond the purchasing power of most peasants.

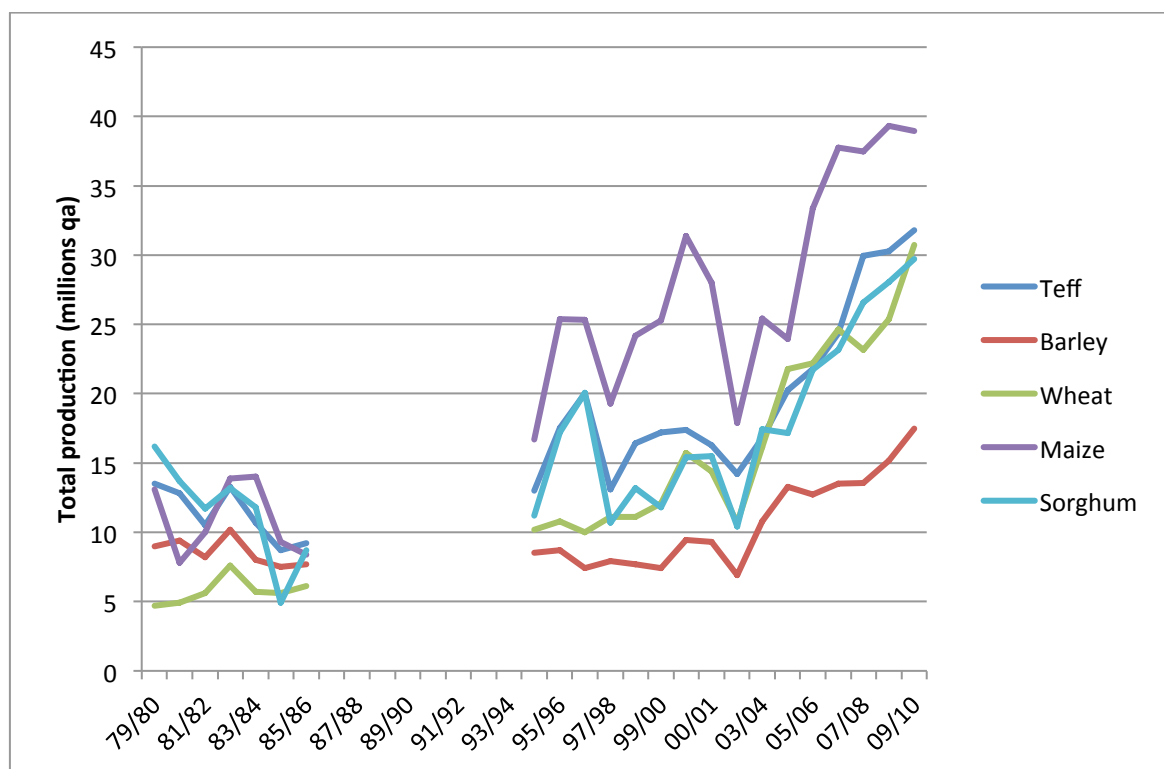
Table 5.3. The marketed proportion of major crops

	Production (qI)	Percentage self-consumption	Percentage sold
Cereals	155,342,280	66	16
- Teff	31,793,743	53	27
- Barley	17,504,436	63	13
- Wheat	30,756,436	59	20
- Maize	38,971,631	75	12
- Sorghum	29,712,655	73	12
- Finger millet	5,241,911	70	14
Pulses	18,980,473	62	21
Vegetables	5,573,568	80	17
Root crops	18,063,778	72	17

Source: CSA (2010b)

²⁵ Dercon and Vargas Hill even question the plausibility of these increases given that their achievement without 'rapid change in technology or input use' (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009, p. 11).

Figure 5.3. Production of major cereals



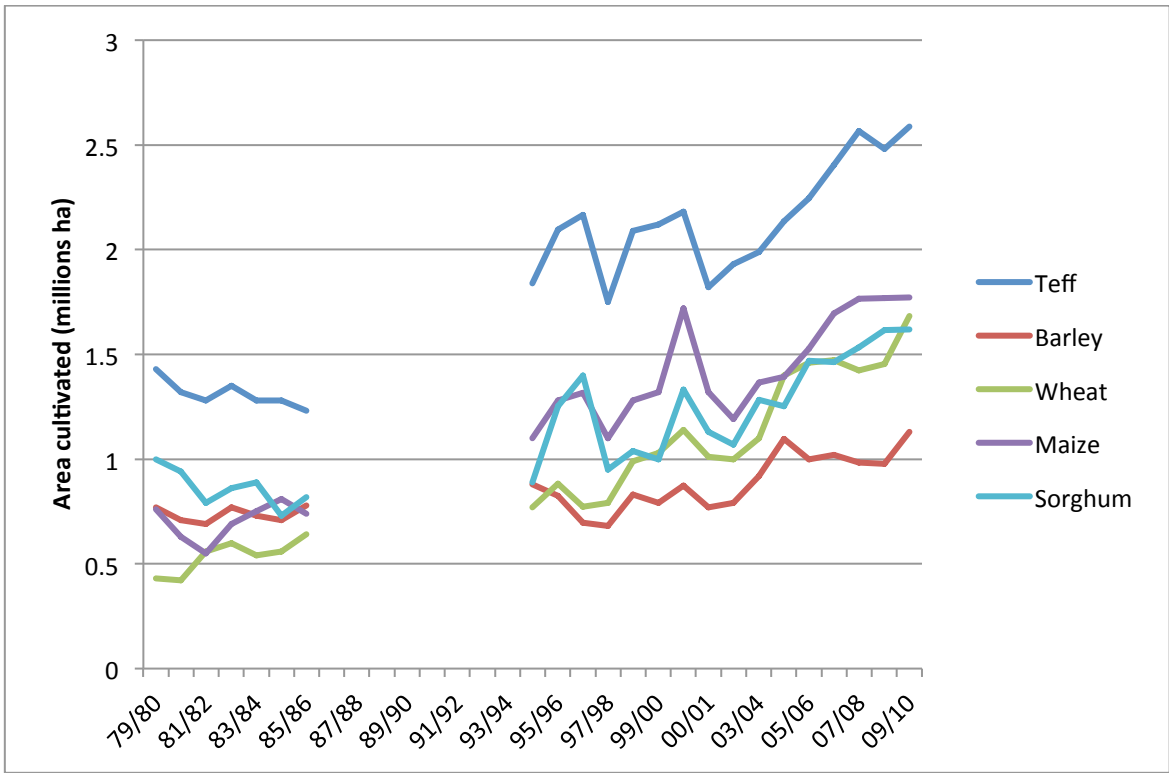
Source: Eberhardt (2008) and CSA's Agricultural Sample Survey (ASS)

Figure 5.4. Mean yields of major cereals



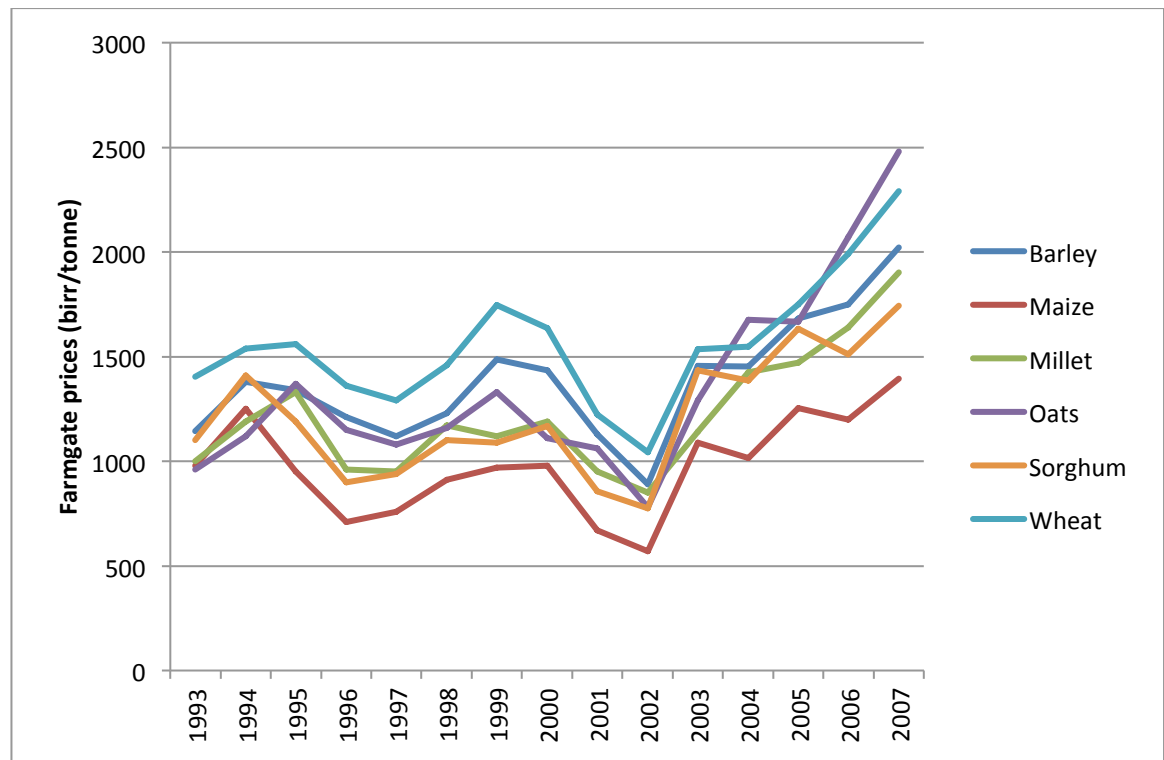
Source: Eberhardt (2008) and CSA's ASS

Figure 5.5. Area under cultivation



Source: Eberhardt (2008) and CSA's ASS

Figure 5.6. Prices of the main cereals in Ethiopia



Source: FAOstat

Rather than providing a reliable supply of cheap wage foods, as required by ADLI, grain markets are characterised by volatile prices and, in particular, recent price increases (see figure 5.6). Researchers have diagnosed these recent problems as the result of government rationing of foreign exchange, which has limited private food imports, and rising international prices (Rashid and Dorosh 2008, Dorosh and Ahmed 2009, Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2010). As well as limiting the forward linkages to industry, high food prices in 2008 prompted the government to import large amounts of wheat and distribute it to poor urban households.

Meanwhile, according to the CSA, the only two industrial crops produced in significant quantities by smallholders are hops and sugarcane, with modest recent production growth. Consequently, there is little indication that industrial crop production has contributed to industrial expansion. The reasons for this are likely to include volatile food prices, which discourage farmers from switching to cash crops and, in doing so, exposing themselves to market risks for food (Leavy and Poulton 2007).

ADLI also proposes that backward linkages will ensue as farmers' wealth increases, creating demand for domestically produced consumption goods and agricultural inputs. As with the forward linkages, these backward production linkages are limited. First, studies suggest that given rural poverty, when incomes do rise, households tend to spend extra money on food rather than consumption goods (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009), limiting demand for domestic manufacturing. Second, even though a few factories have been established around Addis Ababa in recent years, for example producing textiles and shoes, a brief walk around markets in any Ethiopian town shows that the vast majority of basic consumption goods are imported from China, rather than being produced domestically. Finally, to date there is no domestic fertiliser production, with Ethiopia solely reliant on imports.

Although ADLI focuses on internal production linkages, exports are expected to play a supporting role, earning foreign exchange to enable the import of capital goods required for industrialisation but which cannot be domestically produced or replaced by labour-intensive production processes (MoFED 2002). Nevertheless, the range of agricultural exports remains limited. Consequently, rather than producing a surplus with which to finance capital imports, during the last five years there was a trade deficit of more than 20 per cent of GDP (MoFED 2010), leading to a foreign exchange crisis. Based on FAO data, the few crops of which significant proportions are exported, such as coffee, oil seeds, soya, tea and chat, are classified as 'export crops'. Although Ethiopia exports some sugar, sugarcane requires local processing and most is produced for the domestic market, and is classified as an 'industrial' crop. Over the period for which data are available, virtually no cereals have been exported. This is partly due to a 2006 directive banning most cereal exports in response to high domestic food prices (MoTI 2008). However, according to Dercon and Vargas Hill (2009), high transportation costs to Djibouti mean that there have only been a few occasions in the last decade when it would have been profitable to export cereals.

It is clear therefore that despite strong reported economic growth,²⁶ ADLI has, thus far, fallen short of its objective of stimulating rapid industrialisation. Indeed, although the industrial sector has grown, this is from a tiny base, with Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) in 2009 just US\$8.47

²⁶ The accuracy of these figures has been disputed by economists and opposition political parties, leading to rows between the government and the IMF, according to Hagmann and Abbink (2011).

per capita (at constant 2000 prices), compared to averages of US\$75.25 per capita for African countries and US\$399.21 for developing countries (*source*: UNIDO statistics). Industry constituted just 12.9 per cent of the Ethiopian economy in 2010, below the government's target of 16.5 per cent (MoFED 2010).

Food security

As well as promoting industrialisation, ADLI and the FSP aim to raise agricultural productivity and entitlements to eliminate food insecurity. Indeed, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) has received some praise for providing medium-term access to regular and reliable support, stabilising household consumption and preventing distress sales of productive assets (e.g. Slater *et al.* 2006). However, in itself, the PSNP is not expected to resolve the food insecurity problem. Rather, complementary programmes in the FSP provide food insecure households with the resources required to achieve food security, either through extension services or a voluntary resettlement programme, which resettles the poorest households from land scarce areas to areas where land is more plentiful.

The FSP has, however, had relatively little success in building household assets and thereby finding a sustainable solution to food insecurity. Only 56,895 households graduated during the first five-year round of the PSNP (MoARD 2009), despite the PASDEP target that all eight million participants achieve food security (MoFED 2005).²⁷ Meanwhile, there have been four resettlement programmes, relocating a total of 286,920 households under the EPRDF (MoFED 2010). All of these programmes have operated within ethnic regions to reduce the likelihood of ethnic conflict between incoming and host communities. In Amhara, 72,000 hectares in the west of North Gondar zone have been allocated to 35-36,000 resettled households (respondent AR1). In Oromiya, there is a resettlement programme relocating people from Hararghe to Wellega and Illubabor (respondent OR1). In SNNPR, people have been resettled from Wolayita to Daura and from Sidama to Kaffa and Bench-Maji zones (respondents SR1, SR2, SR3). Finally, in 2005 and 2006 there was a resettlement programme in Tigray from the Eastern highlands to the west, in particular Humera. This programme has, however, now ended since there is no more land available (respondent IR3).

The FSP has therefore made, at best, modest progress to resolving the food insecurity problem. The government has now proposed the capital-intensive Complementary Community Investment (CCI) programme as a means of supporting the labour-intensive public works in developing community infrastructure and contributing to the resolution of the food insecurity problem. Meanwhile, according to a representative of the Development Assistance Group (DAG), Ethiopia's foreign donors, who focused exclusively on establishing the PSNP's delivery mechanism during the initial phase (2005-09), are increasingly turning their attention to the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) and the goal of graduation now that the PSNP is running relatively smoothly (respondent FD5). This could provide additional resources for the programme. Based on these initiatives, the government expects nearly six million people to graduate by 2014, leaving just 1.3m, primarily those receiving direct support (MoFED 2010, p. 35).

²⁷ There are no data on the number of individual 'graduates' during the first phase. Based on rural fertility rates of 4.65 (CSA 2008) and assuming a household structure of one adult man and one woman, approximately 380,000 of 8 million participants graduated during the first phase.

Large-scale investment and the emerging dualism in Ethiopian agriculture

This section examines processes of agricultural investment. The analysis focuses on changes in government policy related to land, social policy and agriculture, and assesses the economic impacts of agricultural investment. The analysis draws primarily on data generated during fieldwork, in particular key informant interviews with relevant parties, and a set of federal and regional government databases which document agricultural investments.

International drivers and government strategy

Recent years have seen a massive increase in international agricultural investment, with African countries, including Ethiopia, among the main investment hotspots (Cotula *et al.* 2009, Deininger and Byerlee 2010).²⁸ Both critics and those more favourably disposed to agricultural investment attribute increased demand for land to concurrent and interlinked crises of food, fuel, finance and environment (Cotula *et al.* 2009, Deininger and Byerlee 2010, Zoomers 2010, White *et al.* 2012). These crises have driven demand for farmland across the globe but particularly in developing countries where there are thought to be substantial areas of 'available' land (Deininger and Byerlee 2010, p. 2).

First, international cereal prices doubled between 2007 and 2008. This food crisis has widely been attributed to structural changes—population growth and urbanisation in China, India and many Arab countries—resulting in increased demand for food imports (GRAIN 2008), and droughts in major grain exporting countries. These sources, however, provide little evidence for major changes in consumption or production, suggesting that commodity speculation based on perceptions of shortages may also have been influential. Food price rises led many private companies to search for land suitable for food production, while states in some food deficit countries offered incentives to private companies or intervened directly to produce food abroad to meet domestic demand (Cotula *et al.* 2009).

Second, increased demand for fuel and instability in oil producing countries caused fossil fuel prices to reach record levels. High fuel prices raised production costs in energy-intensive agriculture and led to a search for lower cost substitutes, including bio-fuels, a trend which has been reinforced by recognition of the growing environmental crisis and a need for low carbon alternatives (McMichael 2010). In particular European Union consumption requirements have driven demand for bio-fuels (Zoomers 2010). These processes have resulted both in the use of traditional food crops such as maize for bio-fuel production, as well as investments which have switched land previously used for food crops to specialised bio-fuel feed crops, such as castor and jatropha (Borras and Franco 2010).

Finally, the ongoing financial crisis has meant that many investment and pension funds have been hesitant to invest in European and North American stock markets and have looked elsewhere for economic opportunities (De Schutter 2011, Daniel 2012). Although some of these funds have financed agricultural production, much of this 'investment' has actually speculated on rising land costs in developing countries (The Oakland Institute 2011a).

²⁸ Deininger and Byerlee (2010, p. vi) found that 'Compared to an average annual expansion of global agricultural land of less than 4 million hectares before 2008, 45 million ha worth of large scale farmland deals were announced even before the end of 2009.'

This recent work on the 'land grab' has focused almost exclusively on factors driving demand for land in developing countries rather than the motivations of receiving countries. However, in Ethiopia, at least, increased investment is not merely the result of increased demand but also a decision by the government to promote land leases. Due to state ownership, investors would not be able to obtain land through market transactions. Rather than investors running roughshod over a passive government, in Ethiopia investment is managed and promoted by the government, selecting investors and investments in an attempt to take advantage of demand for land and achieve its developmental objectives.

A number of factors combined to convince senior policymakers that new initiatives were required. First, a mounting body of evidence, discussed previously, demonstrates the limited success of the smallholder sector and the unsustainability of past policies. Second, the trade deficit and growing foreign exchange crisis highlighted the implausibility of maintaining a strategy focused almost exclusively on domestic production linkages and the urgent need to increase exports. Third, government officials have come under increasing pressure from donors, in particular the World Bank, to promote agricultural commercialisation, while the potential impact of agricultural investment has been demonstrated by horticultural projects in neighbouring Kenya (Amdissa Teshome 2006).

The secrecy regarding investment in Ethiopia makes it extremely difficult to determine to what extent foreign investors or their governments influenced this policy change. Although Chinese investors are key players in other developing countries (Cotula *et al.* 2009), thus far there are few Chinese agricultural investments in Ethiopia. Consequently, though the Chinese government undoubtedly has some influence in Ethiopia, they are unlikely to be behind the change. Rather, the largest investors in Ethiopia to date are companies from India, Germany, Israel and Saudi Arabia. One person who has played a role in the changes is Sheik Mohammed Al-Amoudi, a joint Ethiopian and Saudi citizen who owns the MIDROC business empire, including numerous agricultural subsidiaries. Al-Amoudi enjoys close links with the Ethiopian government and Saudi Royal Family, and even organised an international exhibition to promote investment in Addis Ababa, bringing together Saudi investors with officials from the Ethiopian government, including former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and other East African countries (MIDROC Ethiopia 2009).

The result is a regionally differentiated dual approach to agricultural policy (MoFED 2005), which represents a compromise between political and economic priorities. The first maintains the politically-sensitive smallholder sector in the highlands, though redoubling efforts to increase productivity and specialisation in high-value export markets. The second envisages a new role for foreign and domestic investment by 'supporting the development of large-scale commercial agriculture where it is feasible' (MoFED 2005, p. 47). Government policymakers claim that these sectors are entirely separate—investors are given 'unused' land in lowland areas that smallholders, lacking resources, could not develop, thereby expanding total production (respondent FG1, MoFED 2005). To this end, the government draws on the productivist discourse, highlighting a key role for the state in bringing together Ethiopian land and labour, with foreign capital. In doing so, government respondents expected investment to play a number of positive roles: earning foreign exchange, creating employment opportunities, facilitating technology transfer to smallholders and addressing national food security (respondents FG1, FG2, OR3, SR4).

Institutional responsibility for investment

The investment sector is legally distinct from the smallholder sector and is governed primarily by a different set of legal proclamations. Ostensibly, this separation is to protect smallholders from displacement resulting from land transfers between the two sectors. All investors must apply for an investment licence, from the Ethiopian Investment Agency (EIA) for foreign investors or from regional agencies for domestic investors (respondent FG3). Investors with licences then submit project proposals to the relevant administration to apply for land, giving the government the ability to select only those in line with government priorities. Land is leased to investors for fixed periods, for example, 15-40 years in Tigray (TNRG 2000 EC) and 35-50 years in SNNPR (SNNPR Investment Agency 2008). These investment leases more closely resemble private property than tenure in the smallholder sector, providing long-term, secure access and the right to use leases as collateral to access credit. Nevertheless, land remains state property and the government retains the right to confiscate land if investors fail to adhere to agreed plans (Oromiya Investment Commission n.d., para. 7, 10, Tigray EPLAUA n.d., para. 6). Consequently, the transfer of land is a state-managed, rather than a market-based, process.

Despite the devolution of land administration to regional governments, in 2009 the growing importance of agricultural investment led the federal government to re-centralise control over investment. The government created the Agricultural Investment Support Directorate (AISD) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) to allocate land to all foreign and large (more than 5,000 hectare) domestic investments. The stated intention of this change was to speed up land allocation compared to regional processes, which, especially in 'emerging' regions were considered slow, bureaucratic and prone to corruption (respondent FG1).

Although all regional governments are administered by EPRDF members or affiliates, the creation of the AISD provoked contrasting responses. Before 2009, all regions were leasing land to investors, broadly in line with federal policy. In the emerging regions, which were created 'from above' by the EPRDF and have always had limited administrative capacity, regional governments submitted to the request to delegate responsibility to the federal government. The AISD has subsequently renegotiated and standardised many contracts originally signed with these regional administrations (respondent FG1, see MoARD 2011). In contrast, the established regions have thus far resisted centralisation, with senior policymakers among my respondents questioning the compatibility of the AISD with constitutionally-enshrined ethno-regional responsibilities (respondents OR3, AR5, IR4). In my interviews, the respondents most opposed to centralisation were those in the Oromiya Investment Commission. For example one stated that,

'The constitution does not allow this [centralisation] to happen. According to the constitution, land is administered by the regions, so to make the changes they [the federal government] need to change the constitution' (respondent OR3).

The tensions created by these changes were also acknowledged by a respondent in the Amhara Investment Promotion Agency,

'It is somewhat self-contradictory. Regions are given full responsibility [for land administration] but the federal government is given responsibility for promoting investment for the whole country. The idea comes from the good intention to

promote development but it makes regional departments unhappy. It does not make for good relations’ (respondent AR5).

Opposition in Oromiya, in particular, is surprising given that the Oromo People’s Democratic Organisation (OPDO) was an artificial creation of the EPRDF to implement federal policy (Clapham 2009), in contrast to administrations in Tigray and, to a lesser extent, Amhara, which have roots in society (Vaughan 2003). My interviews failed to reveal significant policy differences on investment between the regional and federal governments that might be the cause of the tensions. A more likely reason is an institutional concern with maintaining administrative power. Alternatively, tensions may reflect an attempt by the EPRDF’s regional affiliates, in particular the OPDO, to enhance their legitimacy in the eyes of their own populations by establishing their autonomy from the EPRDF.

The economic roles of investment

The policies and laws formulated by federal and regional governments contain a number of restrictions and incentives which reflect an attempt to realise key objectives—increasing export and food crop production, expanding industrial processing, creating employment and focusing on low population areas to limit smallholder displacement. For example, investors are eligible for exemptions from corporation and export taxes for five years if they export more than half their production or providing 75 per cent to exporters (FDRE 2003, para. 4). In contrast, those producing for the domestic market are given lower priority, paying no tax for only two years. An additional incentive is that the state-owned Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) provides concessional lending of up to 70 per cent of an investment. The DBE does not require investors to provide any capital and lends at lower interest rates than commercial banks. According to an official at the DBE, it does, however, promote production linkages by requiring investment in crop processing and only lends money for priority projects—those that produce export goods, grain for domestic markets and create employment (respondent FG2).

Table 5.4 presents foreign investments according to the likely economic roles of investment crops, based on the classification in the previous section. Most land under active projects, and a substantial proportion of pre-implementation projects, is for bio-fuel feed crops, in particular castor and jatropha.²⁹ These projects are few in number but cover a large area. Currently no bio-fuel is processed in Ethiopia, although some investors plan to establish domestic processing in the future. As a result, bio-fuels are currently export crops and bio-fuel investors among my respondents reported that China was the most common destination (respondents HI1, HI2). In the future, if processed and marketed domestically, bio-fuels could also replace imports, reducing foreign currency requirements.

²⁹ According to the EIA, projects are classified as pre-implementation if the investor has been granted an investment licence by the relevant authority but not yet allocated land, and ‘implementation’ or ‘operation’, which I have aggregated to ‘active’, if the investor has been allocated land.

Table 5.4. The economic roles of foreign investment crops³⁰

	Pre-implementation (ha)	Percentage	Active (ha)	Percentage	Active (no. of projects)	Percentage
Export crops	1,577,161	32	129,497	20	144	49
Coffee	29,680	1	3,601	1	6	2
Horti/floriculture	278,019	6	3,274	0	99	33
Oil crops	502,632	10	73,687	11	11	4
Wheat	502,535	10	0	0	0	0
Other	264,295	5	48,935	7	28	9
Bio-fuel crops	745,410	15	255,101	39	7	2
Industrial inputs	504,294	10	120,314	18	23	8
Peasant foods	522,267	10	91,565	14	22	7
Wage foods	905,251	18	46,235	7	75	25
Miscellaneous	725,386	15	13,194	2	25	8
<i>Total</i>	<i>4,979,769</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>655,906</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>100</i>

Sources: EIA (2010) and MoARD (2011)

³⁰ Crops are classified based on analysis of the smallholder sector unless the dataset specifies that the crop is for export or if it says that sugarcane is used for ethanol production (rather than sugar, which requires industrial processing). Some investments list several crops, in which case the land size is evenly divided between each crop.

Between bio-fuel crops and the export crop category, export crops constitute the largest category of both active and pre-implementation investments. Of the export crops, floriculture constitutes the greatest number of projects but very little land, indicating that projects are small. The main contribution of these export-oriented investments will be earning foreign exchange by exporting produce and spending part of the money on operational costs such as wages and any locally-sourced inputs (Sklair 1994). The impact of employment will be higher in labour-intensive projects such as floriculture. In addition, these flower farms have also spawned packaging factories, although most inputs used in flower production are imported (Ayelech Tiruwha Melese and Helmsing 2010).

Vitally, given domestic food security problems, there are few investments likely to contribute to peasant food availability. At just 14 per cent of the land leased so far, investors growing peasant foods are at best likely to make a small contribution to food security. Similarly, the overlap between peasant and wage foods means that the limited investment in these crops is likely to make only a limited contribution to urban food supplies. The majority of land producing peasant foods under active projects is leased by Karuturi, an Indian investor who has said that he intends to market much of his crop in Ethiopia, with the remainder destined for neighbouring African countries (Davison 2010a). In addition, a few foreign investors producing grains for export claim they will market part of their produce domestically as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy (Empora 2009, Belayneh Tesfaye 2010). However, these are not contractual obligations (MoARD 2010) and it remains to be seen whether these promises will transpire.

The 'wage foods' category in table 5.4 consists mainly of livestock projects. Meat is categorised as a 'wage food' because previous production has served the domestic market. Nonetheless, a few investors explicitly state that their investments will produce meat for export and were accordingly classified. It is unclear whether most livestock projects, which do not state their destination market, will continue to produce for domestic markets or if meat will become a major export.

In addition to wage food production lowering the salary required for a living wage, investment could potentially contribute to industrialisation through the production of industrial inputs. However, realising these linkages requires local processing. A 25,000 hectare Chinese sugarcane plantation in Gambella (MoARD 2011) is likely to require local processing as sugarcane must be processed shortly after being cut to prevent fermentation. In contrast, cotton, which constitutes the majority of the land leased for industrial crops, could be exported for processing elsewhere, raising some doubt about the destination of the cotton produced. Nevertheless, cotton production is given special priority by the DBE, exempting investors from the requirement to invest in local processing, since the few textile factories already established in Ethiopia have experienced difficulties sourcing good quality materials (respondent FG2). There are also some isolated examples of investments directly contributing to local processing, with rice and sesame dryers planned by investors (Hilina Alemu 2010).

Government officials have been reluctant to acknowledge a change in development strategy, which would imply recognition of ADLI's problems. Nonetheless, the export-oriented nature of investment signifies a move from a strong focus on internal production linkages in ADLI towards a more trade-based development strategy. To this end, the exchange rate was devalued by 20 per cent overnight in September 2010 in an attempt to improve export competitiveness for

agricultural and industrial products, and to promote import substitution (Hailu 2010, MoFED 2010). In addition, government resources are increasingly focused on promoting export-oriented agricultural investments through subsidised loans from the DBE, tax incentives and priority access to land and irrigation for investors. In contrast with the original articulation of ADLI, in which foreign trade had a minor role, the government anticipates that these projects will address the foreign exchange shortage and ultimately enable the import of machinery to advance industrialisation, enabling it to become the key sector of the economy (MoFED 2010). According to one respondent in the AISD,

‘The investors bring foreign currency, which is in the interests of the country. Foreign exchange is needed to develop the other [non-agricultural] sectors of the economy. Ethiopia cannot develop with just food’ (respondent FG1).

Despite statements by mid-level officials that they expected investment to contribute directly to improved food security, the change in development strategy also reflects a change to a trade-based food security strategy. As Dr Abera Deressa, State Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development explained, ‘If we get money we can buy food anywhere. Then we can solve the food problem’ (Davison 2010b). Apparently, it is the anticipation of increased foreign exchange earnings that is behind the government’s recent claim that national food security will be achieved within five years (MoFED 2010). Given the overlap between peasant and wage foods, this strategy also implies a reliance on imported wage foods, a key linkage to support industrialisation, as well as the commercialisation of smallholder agriculture. Nonetheless, there are great risks to relying on trade for food security in developing countries where even a temporary fall in export prices or rise in food prices can reduce consumption below a necessary minimum (Chang 2009, De Schutter 2011). Clearly this is particularly relevant in the contemporary context of high and fluctuating global food and fuel prices.

Conclusions

Despite the continuation of state land ownership, this chapter has shown that land tenure has evolved under the EPRDF. A common trend across federal and regional policies has been to reduce the influence of the class homogeneity discourse—with future redistributions increasingly unlikely—and to protect individual land rights through registration, with the aim of increasing farmers’ production incentives. There is, however, some variation between regions. The Tigray proclamation provides the justification for the greatest state intervention to protect smallholders and prevent class differentiation, while at the other extreme the Amhara proclamation envisages the smallest role for the state, in principle, at least, expanding smallholders’ choices.

Nevertheless, despite the dominance of small farmers, smallholder agriculture has, as yet, been unable to achieve ADLI’s key objectives—increasing the agricultural surplus, stimulating industrialisation and achieving food security. The analysis has pointed to serious problems in the supply of agricultural inputs and the market for agricultural produce, which have constrained productivity. Chapters six and seven analyse case studies of the implementation of social policy in smallholder agriculture, focusing on the changing influences of discourses on land, and the links between land policy, agricultural production and food security.

The failings of government policies towards the smallholder sector, along with international crises, have prompted the government to promote large-scale agricultural investment projects. This chapter is the first piece of research to analyse empirical evidence regarding the economic roles played by these investments in Ethiopia, highlighting the export-oriented nature of the projects and the implied shift to a more trade-based development strategy. The promotion of investment, meanwhile, raises important social policy issues, which are central concerns of the case studies in chapter eight. While chapter four highlighted the compatibility of the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses with ADLI, the promotion of large-scale investment is hard to reconcile with these discourses. In particular, large-scale capitalist agriculture involves class differentiation between investors and labourers working on their farms, while the lease of large tracts of land to investors raises the possibility that investment may displace existing users, in direct contravention of the peasant security discourse.

The analysis has also identified several instances where the formulation of national social policy and development strategies is in tension with federalism and ethnic self-administration. In particular, the importance of the land policy to ADLI necessarily limits the freedom of regions to formulate land policies, while the promotion of agricultural investment by the federal government has led to the re-centralisation of administrative powers. This latter change has potentially important implications for social policy and state-society relations, addressed in chapters nine and ten, given the tension between large-scale agricultural investment and the social policy objectives of the land policy, and the loss of ethnic autonomy.

PART THREE

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

ADAPTING VISIONS OF SOCIAL POLICY TO A COMPLEX REALITY

Introduction to the cases

Part three examines case studies of social policy implementation and addresses the second research question: *how are social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?* These case studies focus on the choices made by zone, *wereda* and *kebele* administrations in the implementation of social policy and the impact of these policies on different types of people. The analysis draws on: data generated during fieldwork, in particular semi-structured interviews and local government records; and the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS). Previous chapters analysed social policy formulation at the federal and regional levels. This social policy strategy is intended to provide protection and opportunities to different types of household, based on a particular interpretation of the risks to which they are exposed. In order for people to benefit from these policies, and for the government's social and economic objectives to be realised, certain types of behaviour, deemed by policymakers to be in individuals' best interests, are required. The aim of this introduction is to specify how the social policies previously discussed apply to different types of rural household, drawing on the thesis' framework.

As discussed in the framework, analysis distinguishes between households based on their access to the inputs required in the local system of production and the intersection of class with the stage of the household in the household lifecycle, gender and ethnicity. The first stage of the standard lifecycle of a smallholder household is that of a young couple with no children who inherit land from their parents, becoming autonomous producers. Subsequently, this couple has children and, frequently, assumes responsibility for supporting parents who are unable to farm themselves. As children reach adulthood, parents are expected to provide land with which children can establish their own household and, in the final years of life, they depend on their children. Where polygyny is practiced, men have second or third marriages, producing more children and adding extra stages to the cycle.

The agricultural inputs required for smallholder production vary by agro-economic zone, with divisions between ox-plough systems producing grains and hoe systems producing enset. In ox-plough agriculture, key inputs and sources of differentiation are land, oxen to draw the plough (Dessaegn Rahmato 1997, Mantovan 2009) and male labour, since women are not expected to plough. In hoe agriculture, oxen are not required for soil preparation and, while men are expected to undertake many agricultural activities, there are no tasks that cannot be carried out by women. As such, the main source of differentiation in hoe agriculture is the size of landholdings. In addition, in areas of unreliable rainfall, access to water sources for irrigation is vital for reliable production and constitutes a key source of differentiation.

As discussed in chapter four, the government's development strategy aims to achieve egalitarian economic growth based on the claim that smallholders who follow the advice of government Development Agents (DAs) and use improved inputs will be able to produce sufficient food for their consumption needs, as well as surplus for sale. In order that economic growth is broad-based and egalitarian, I argue that Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) is based on an implicit assumption that households with access to sufficient agricultural inputs for the particular agro-economic area constitute the norm. I refer to these households as 'ideal', from the perspective of ADLI. The analysis in the following chapters therefore classifies households

based on their access to these agricultural inputs, using ERHS data, as an entry point to analysis of the agricultural system of production. Qualitative data from in-depth interviews with residents of case study sites are then used to explore individual experiences in greater detail, going beyond these necessarily simple household classifications.

The amount of land required by a household fluctuates based on its position in the lifecycle and the number of dependents supported. Nevertheless, given restrictions on land transfers, the minimum for an 'ideal' household should be that required to meet the household's needs at any point in the lifecycle. Naturally this size varies based on soil quality and crop type. However, at least one hectare is used as a rough estimate in grain producing areas (Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002, Mellor and Dorosh 2010), of which at least 0.5 hectares should be irrigated in rainfall deficit areas. In hoe-enset agricultural systems, 0.5 hectares is considered the minimum required (Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002, Mellor and Dorosh 2010), given the complex system of intercropping, which can support a large number of people per hectare (Bevan and Pankhurst 1996, Tadesse Kippie Kanshie 2002).

For farmers with an 'ideal' set of inputs, the land policy provides protection by preventing distress sales of land, in the event of shocks. These shocks might be community-wide—such as adverse weather conditions or low grain prices—or household-specific—such as medical expenses. The land policy also permits farmers to rent out part of their land to earn money or sharecrop land if they lack labour, potentially helping landholders to overcome short-term problems after which they can return to farming themselves. The land policy not only protects peasants, but also aims to provide farmers with production incentives. In particular, land registration aims to increase tenure security to support long- and short-term investment.

The government also asserts that the land policy protects landholders who lack male labour. In the final stage of the lifecycle, many households lack male labour because the man is too old for physical labour, in which case the government sees the land policy as providing a form of pension to the elderly—ensuring land access and an income through sharecropping. Similarly, the death or disablement of the man in a household can constitute a divergence from the standard household lifecycle, becoming reliant on sharecropping for income. Indeed, one objective of recent land proclamations has been to improve tenure security for women. These proclamations aim to ensure that widows retain their land, providing a form of life insurance through sharecropping. In the subsequent analysis, the presence of a man between the ages of 16 and 70³¹ in the household is used to estimate the capability to plough.

While government policy focuses on 'ideal' households and those lacking male labour, other households are also affected by the land policy. First, some landholders have no oxen and must borrow or rent animals, or sharecrop out their land. Second, other households lack the 'ideal' set of agricultural inputs but nevertheless have the basic inputs required for some agricultural production—some land, though not necessarily sufficient, male labour and at least one ox. For these households, rather than a guarantee of a livelihood, the land policy provides security from eviction and access to a partial livelihood. These households do, however, have the possibility of expanding production through rental agreements or supplementing agricultural production with

³¹ This estimate is based on fieldwork experience and ERHS data, which show that many men continued to plough well into their 60s.

off-farm income. Finally, since land redistribution was last conducted, rapid population growth has led to land shortages and landlessness, especially among young adults. The only means of accessing land for these people is to rent or sharecrop in the land of those unable to farm.

The government's development strategy also promotes the use of improved inputs. In addition to their effects on yields, these inputs—seeds, fertiliser, pesticides and irrigation—also reduce the risk and increase the returns of investment in intensified or expanded production. Equally, market integration—another objective of ADLI—not only provides incentives for farmers to intensify production, but also to expand through land transfers. Other things being equal, therefore, market integration and use of improved inputs would be expected to lead to land consolidation and differentiation between small capitalist farmers and wage labourers (Pearce 1983, Bernstein 2010). Consequently, in order to limit this process of differentiation, the land policy restricts the sale and rental of land.

The objectives of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and the Food Security Programme (FSP), of which it is a part, are intricately intertwined with those of the land policy. The FSP operates in areas classified as 'chronically food insecure' where many households consistently fall short of the 'ideal' or even basic set of agricultural inputs. The FSP designates paths for different types of food insecure household, which, if correctly followed, are expected to provide a minimum income, enabling them to 'graduate' from assistance.

The PSNP targets chronically food insecure households, enabling them to meet their consumption requirements in the medium-term without further diminishing their productive assets. For the elderly or disabled who are unable to work, unconditional direct support is provided. Men and women of working age are required to participate in public works, which, along with capital-intensive Complementary Community Investments (CCI), aim to build community infrastructure. Furthermore, the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) offers extension packages and credit, to improve access to productive assets for households that fall short of the 'ideal'. Although in principle the HABP addresses agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods, the plans for off-farm activities are at an early stage of elaboration, with no clear policy prescriptions (MoARD 2009). In contrast agricultural packages are well established, providing livestock, improved seeds and fertiliser. Together, these community and household level interventions, if correctly implemented by participants under the direction of DAs, are expected to improve market access and agricultural productivity enabling participants to achieve self-sufficiency. Meanwhile, for the poorest households, which lack sufficient land to take advantage of the HABP, a voluntary resettlement programme relocates households to areas where land is more plentiful, providing access to the 'ideal' set of agricultural inputs in their new home.

These policies are evidently formulated from the perspective of smallholder agriculture. The relevance of government social policy to other livelihoods, for example pastoralism and shifting cultivation, is unclear. As discussed in chapter four, government policy is ambiguous regarding these groups, protecting their land rights in principle yet also arguing that their livelihoods are unsustainable.

6

Social policy and agricultural production in a grain surplus site

Turufe Kechema is situated in a fertile area in the Rift Valley. The village lies at 2,000m above sea level, farmland is relatively flat and receives reliable rainfall, particularly during the long *meher* rains (June-September), but frequently also the *belg* rains (March-May). The site enjoys good market access, lying on the outskirts of Kuyera and Hamus Gebeya, and 11km on a good tarmac road from Shashemene, capital of West Arssi zone, and 220km from Addis Ababa.

Most farmers grow wheat during the long rainy season and potatoes during the short rains. A few wealthy farmers also grow *teff*. Maize was previously common but most farmers stopped growing the crop because they lost much of their harvest to theft.³² Improved varieties of maize and wheat have been demonstrated to increase yields considerably. As such, sites like Turufe are key to the economic objectives of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI), since they offer the potential of producing a surplus, supporting industrialisation through the supply of wage foods, and providing demand for manufactured agricultural inputs and consumption goods.

The majority of the population is from the Arssi Oromo ethnic group, who are predominately Muslim. Under the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) there has been an attempt to re-establish the *gadaa* (respondent OR2 – see appendix B), the customary system of social and political organisation in Oromo society. *Gadaa* was in use since the sixteenth century, but was abandoned in most places during the Imperial and *Derg* administrations (Asafa 2005). Among other functions, *gadaa* prescribes political and military roles for men and nominates the *Aba Gadaa* as the community's political leader. Though formally independent from the state, the re-instated *gadaa* follows the government administrative hierarchy. Indeed, the *Aba Gadaa* in Shashemene *wereda* has a desk in the *wereda* Culture and Tourism office.³³ Meanwhile, elders

³² As farmers live in a village some way from their farmland, maize is prone to theft, whereas the smaller grains of wheat are less vulnerable.

³³ *Aba Gadaa* in West Arssi and East Shewa requested letters of authorisation from the regional and zonal Bureaux of Culture and Tourism in order to participate in interviews—a common practice among government employees. When I returned with the letters, the *Aba Gadaa* in Shashemene continued to evade me, missing two appointments and then switched off his phone. As well as constituting an unfortunate gap in the fieldwork, this demonstrates the degree to which *Aba Gadaa* have been incorporated into the government chain of command.

(*shimagle*), who report to the *Aba Gadaa*, are trained by the *wereda* and are issued with government ID cards (respondent TM8).

The Arssi are divided into clans (*gosa*) and lineages (*balbala*), which provide a communal alternative to government discourses. A principal objective of local customary tenure is to retain land within the patrilineal clan. As such, customary law requires women to marry outside the clan, moving to their husband's village and losing land in their home village. In addition, if a woman is widowed, she must marry a male relative of her deceased husband (*dhaaluu*) to ensure that land stays in the husband's family and any children are protected (Mamo Hebo 2006). The Arssi also practice polygyny, although land shortages have meant a decline in its occurrence.

Despite this clan-based tenure, successive governments have ignored ethnicity in land administration and there has been a steady flow of migrants into Turufe. Some of the first non-Oromo arrived when the area was conquered by the Ethiopian state in the nineteenth century. Northern soldiers (*neftegna*), especially Amhara, were allocated rights to extract tribute from Arssi Oromo farmers (*gebbar*) as reward for military service (Bahru Zewde 1991). From the 1950s, many migrants came to the area to seek treatment at the nearby clinic, now the Shashemene Referral Hospital, which has long been a centre for leprosy treatment. At that time, Swedish Protestant missionaries, who established the clinic, held 12 *gasha* (480 hectares) of land around Turufe (respondent TM26). These missionaries rehabilitated people treated for leprosy, in particular the Kembata, by dividing two *gasha* between them (respondent TM26). The area has also attracted migrant labour during busy agricultural periods and some of these migrants have subsequently settled. The result is that there are sizeable minorities of Amhara, Tigrawi, Kembata and Wolayita in Turufe (table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Ethnicity of household heads and their spouses in Turufe Kechema

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Oromo	98	54
Tigrawi	34	19
Amhara	18	10
Wolayita	11	6
Kembata	8	4
Other	14	8
<i>Total</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: ERHS 2004

Under the *Derg*, land was redistributed several times between 1977 and 1990 to adjust for changing household size, regardless of ethnicity. The *Derg* also carried out villagisation and agricultural collectivisation in 1985, and although collective agriculture was abandoned towards the end of the *Derg* era, the majority remain in these villages. Since the EPRDF took power in 1991, land has not been redistributed.

Since 2006/07 Turufe has been part of newly created West Arssi zone, governed from nearby Shashemene. This change resulted in increased investment in Shashemene, which in turn translates into increased demand for Turufe's agricultural production. Turufe Kechema is part of

Shashemene Zuria *wereda* and is one of three villages in Turufe-Wetera-Elemo (TWE) *kebele*. The *kebele* is divided into three *gott*, one for each village, with Turufe Kechema *gott* further divided into 20 *gare* and, below that, cells responsible for 10 households. Each of these government units elects representatives responsible for mobilising people for government campaigns and representing their interests to higher levels of government. The *kebele* is managed by a cabinet, including the chairman, vice-chairman and manager. In each *kebele*, there should be three Development Agents (DAs) responsible for plants, animals and natural resources. However, during the fieldwork only one position was filled, that responsible for plants. The Farmer Training Centre, which is supposed to be the focus of the DA's work, was not yet operational.

There is a Land Administration Committee (LAC) responsible for measuring land for certificates. In the event of disputed ownership, the LAC refers the matter to the *kebele* administration. As stated in the land proclamation, elders, nominated by each disputant, make the first attempt at resolution. These elders are responsible to the *Aba Gadaa* and implement customary law. If their mediation is not accepted by either party, the matter is referred to the *wereda* court.

The closest Farmers' Cooperative (*gamtaa*)—the main source of fertiliser and improved seeds—is located in nearby Hamus Gebeya. The cooperatives in the area elect a Farmers' Union (*waldaa*). The cooperatives and unions were formerly government organisations, responsible to the Agricultural Office. However, according to a cooperative representative, they have recently been made autonomous (respondent TK8). Nonetheless, the cooperative and union offices are still within government compounds and any separation from the state was not clear to most farmers.

Oromiya and TWE are ruled by the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO), a member of the EPRDF. No opposition political parties were present in the site during fieldwork in January 2010, prior to the May elections or in the five years since the previous election.

The agricultural system of production

According to the 2009 ERHS, 24 per cent of respondents had access to the 'ideal' agricultural inputs for Turufe—at least one hectare of their own land, male labour and a pair of oxen (table 6.2). Most of these households have a male head who was old enough to be allocated land during the last redistribution in the late 1980s, therefore at least 38 years old during fieldwork. Many of these farmers use improved inputs and produce a surplus for sale. Farmers take grain by donkey and cart to the market in Shashemene, while traders come to buy potatoes in Turufe for transport to Addis Ababa.

Improved varieties of wheat, maize and *teff* were introduced in 2007 and, according to respondents' estimates, increase yields by 30 to 100 per cent with chemical fertilisers. Declining yields from recycled seed, however, mean farmers must buy seeds every other year to maintain high yields (respondents TK4, TM6). Fertiliser prices in Turufe have increased from 192 *birr* per quintal in 1993 to 500 *birr* per quintal in 2004 (Yohannes Gezahegn *et al.* 2006). In 2010, the cooperative's price was 430 *birr* per quintal (respondent TK8). DAs have recently encouraged farmers to start composting as a cheaper alternative.

Table 6.2. Access to agricultural inputs in Turufe Kechema³⁴

	Percentage of respondents
'Ideal' set of inputs (1ha, labour, pair oxen)	24
Some land but no male labour	11
Land and labour but no ox	33
Basic set of inputs (some land, labour, one ox)	32

Source: ERHS 2009

The main source of improved seeds and fertiliser is the farmers' cooperative, although the DA is also allocated a smaller quantity to distribute. To join the cooperative, prospective members must have land of their own and pay a 110 *birr* fee (respondent TK8). Faced with a seed shortage, the cooperative and the DA favour the most 'effective' farmers, selecting those that are free of debt and have at least one hectare (respondent TK4). There are also some improved seeds available in Shashemene market, although respondents reported that they are usually more expensive and can be of poor quality (respondents TK8, TF11, TM16).

In the past, farmers could take inputs on credit from the cooperative and pay at the end of the agricultural season. However, high default rates resulted in the abandonment of the programme. There are few alternative sources of credit. According to the 2009 ERHS, 61 per cent of respondents took a loan of some sort in the previous year. Of these, 44 per cent were from *iddir* (burial associations) and 34 per cent from friends and relatives. The average loan from the *iddir* was 230 *birr*, insufficient to buy improved inputs. Indeed, none of my respondents found credit to purchase improved seeds. Consequently, only relatively wealthy farmers who can pay for seeds and fertiliser—approximately 2,000 *birr* per hectare—at the beginning of the season use improved inputs.

The only irrigation source is a stream that irrigates three hectares divided into 20 garden plots. These households grow tomatoes, onions and chillies, mostly for sale in local markets. The *kebele* manager believes that this stream could irrigate 8-10 hectares (respondent TK3) and the administration has encouraged farmers to purchase a motor and pump (respondent TK5). Thus far they have not been able to obtain the money to do so (respondents TM2, TK5). The limited irrigation potential and relatively reliable rainfall, however, mean that access to irrigation is not a source of differentiation.

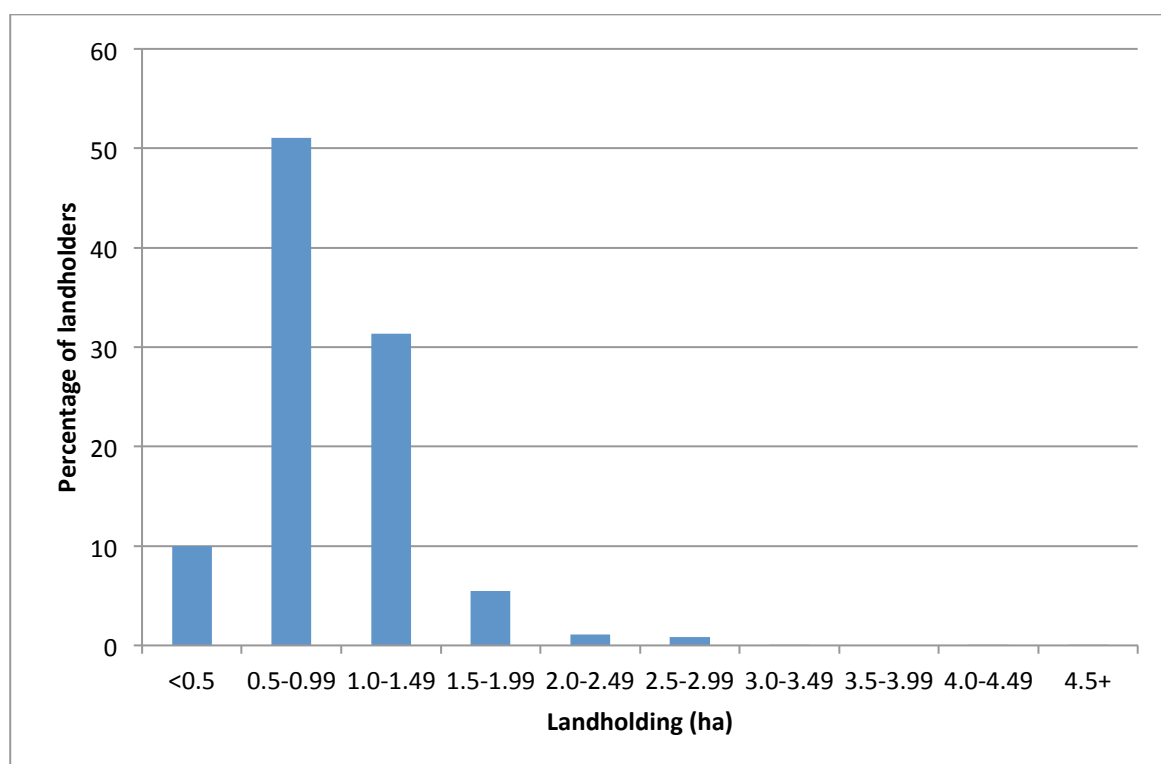
The result of these constraints is that adoption of improved inputs remains low in Turufe. Based on the 2009 ERHS, 10 per cent of plots were sown using improved seeds, 17 per cent using chemical fertiliser and 27 per cent using manure or compost. Although these figures are slightly higher than the national averages reported in chapter five, they fall short of what is required to achieve ADLI's objectives.

Rather than constituting the norm, as anticipated by government policy, farmers with the ideal set of inputs are actually a small minority. Seventy-six per cent of landholders have a reduced set of inputs and consequently reduced production opportunities. One of the principal sources of

³⁴ As the ERHS sampling was conducted in 1994, shortly after the last land redistribution, there are no landless households.

differentiation from this 'ideal' is a lack of farmland. According to several older respondents, land was plentiful in their youth and adequate for the local population during redistributions in the 1970s (respondents TM4, TM10). However, subsequent population growth and migration have resulted in a severe shortage. The *kebele* administration's land register shows that 60 per cent of landholders have less than one hectare (see figure 6.1). These landholdings are fragmented, with each hectare divided into an average of 3.1 plots.

Figure 6.1. Distribution of landholdings in Turufe Kechema



Source: TWE *kebele* land registry

Although there are no records of the landless, given the high proportion of young adults in the population and the length of time since the last land redistribution, their number is certainly substantial. Indeed, the *kebele* manager estimated that the landless actually constitute the majority (respondent TK3).

Eleven per cent of households had no male members between the ages of 16 and 70, a likely indication of a shortage of male labour. The inheritance of widows by male relatives of the deceased has probably limited the occurrence of female-headed households. Many of these households must sharecrop or rent out their land to earn an income. In Turufe, the standard sharecropping agreement stipulates that the sharecropper pays for seeds and fertiliser and keeps all the chaff, while the grain is split evenly between landholder and sharecropper.

Thirty-three per cent of respondents had some land and male labour, but no oxen. The number of livestock that can be supported on the five hectares of communal grazing land and households' fields is limited. Consequently, it is difficult for households that lack animals to borrow or rent them, since everyone needs to use them during the same busy periods. An additional option for households lacking oxen or labour is to call a work party (*dego*) where neighbours plough their

land in exchange for *tella*, *wot* and *injera* (Getachew Fule and Mesfin Tadesse 1996). Although these work parties are not common, the 2009 ERHS reports a few instances.

The remaining 32 per cent of respondents had access to a basic set of agricultural inputs—some land, male labour and at least one ox, enabling them to share with others in order to plough. These households may not be able to reproduce from year to year based solely on their own land, although they also have the potential to sharecrop or rent in more land and better approximate the ‘ideal’.

The ERHS shows that Oromo and Tigrawi households on average have 1.1 hectares, larger than Amhara households, with 0.8 hectares. Tigrawi farmers are, however, better off with respect to the classification of households. Thirty-five per cent of Tigrawi farmers have the ideal set of inputs, compared to 27 per cent of Oromo. The main difference is livestock ownership, with on average 1.4 oxen per Tigrawi household compared to 1.0 per Oromo household.

In addition to agriculture, some households pursue supplemental income earning activities (see table 6.3). For men, successful farmers employ day labourers during busy periods, in particular harvest. Occasionally day labour is also available building houses, while young men act as brokers negotiating between traders and farmers. Many women earn additional income distilling *areqi* and brewing *tella* for sale in small bars. Nevertheless, in 2009, only 15 per cent of household income came from off-farm activities, compared to 84 per cent from crop production.³⁵

Table 6.3. Sources of off-farm income in Turufe Kechema

	Number of respondents
Brewing local alcohols	17
Farm worker	16
Trade in grains	11
Skilled labourer	5
Driver/mechanic	5
Unskilled off-farm work	5
Trade in livestock	5
Professional (teacher, govt official etc)	4
Transport (by pack animal)	4
Trader	3
Domestic servant	3
Weaving / spinning	3
Milling	3
Collecting/selling firewood/dungcakes	3
Other	8

Source: ERHS 2009

³⁵ These figures are based on the conversion of agricultural products into money based on estimates of local prices from the ERHS. The figures are intended as a guide to the relative importance of different sources of income but are only estimates.

Finally, the *wereda* recently allocated 13 hectares of communal land to an Ethiopian investor currently living in Denmark. The investor did not compensate the community but the *kebele* administration reports that people were consulted and approved the lease based on a promise to provide drinking water and electricity, currently only available in Turufe village, to the rest of the *kebele* (respondents TK2, TK3). The investor has not yet started production and details of the project are unclear. Nevertheless, the *kebele* administration expects him to farm cereals using improved seeds and fertiliser, as well as providing employment for 10 people (respondent TK3).

Social policy and agricultural production in practice

The peasant security discourse highlights the dangers of cash rental, since, like land sales, long-term rental could displace farmers and leave them without income. As such, the Oromiya land proclamation permits farmers to rent out only half their land for three years at a time (ONRG 2007, para. 10). The *kebele* and *wereda* administrations draw on this rationale, with respondents arguing that in the absence of government restrictions, landholders would rent their land either to address economic problems or because their 'knowledge is low' (respondents TK3, TW2). They contend that having rented their land, farmers would waste the money on alcohol and chewing *chat*, leaving them destitute (respondent TW2). Consequently, the *kebele* administration goes beyond regional restrictions, permitting landholders to rent just a quarter of their land for 1-2 years, except in exceptional circumstances. They also require landholders to present a 'convincing' argument why they should be allowed to rent any land (respondents TK1, TK3). Legitimate reasons include medical expenses or education costs (respondent TK1).

As such, while some senior policymakers are keen to promote land rental markets based on neo-liberal arguments, in Turufe implementation remains dominated by the paternalist peasant security discourse and the only positive contribution of rental is considered to be a means for farmers to obtain money in emergencies. In the words of one *wereda* official,

'The government intention is that development will not come through rental. According to ADLI, development will only happen if farmers farm the land. The government does give land to investors because this will increase productivity. However, the purpose of rental is only to help people who are in trouble, hence the restrictions on rental, because rental will not increase productivity or lead to development' (respondent TW2).

The local administrators do, however, make a distinction between sharecropping and cash rental. In contrast to rental, sharecropping is not subject to restrictions, since it provides an annual, in-kind income, which is less likely to be wasted (respondent TK2). Sharecropping also provides an important means of transferring land from those unable to farm, ensuring that all farmland is cultivated.

The land policy and the guarantee of a livelihood

The vast majority of ERHS respondents in 2004 and 2009 reported facing some food shortage in the previous year (figure 6.2). While in 2008/09, drought affected the crop production of the whole community, most respondents reported being content with the rainfall in 2004.³⁶ In addition, more than 65 per cent of respondents in 2009 stated that in a 'normal' year, their own crop production is insufficient for household consumption in at least one month (figure 6.3). Food shortages cannot therefore be solely attributed to poor weather, but are instead the result of the shortage of land and other agricultural inputs. On average, in 2009, households with the ideal set of agricultural inputs faced food shortages of less than one month, those with the basic set of inputs and those lacking male labour reported shortages of two months and those lacking any oxen faced shortages of three months in the previous year. As such, rather than a guarantee of a livelihood, as suggested by the peasant security discourse, for most households the land policy guarantees only a partial subsistence.

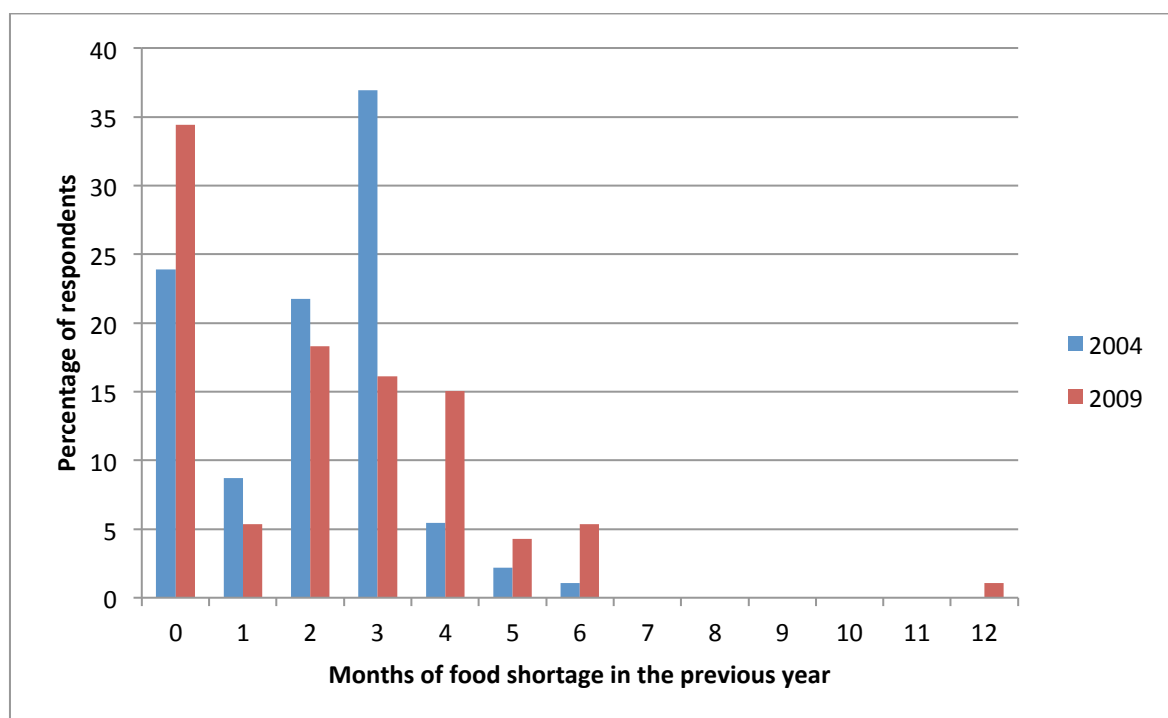
Since the *wereda* is not classified as 'chronically food-insecure', the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) does not operate. Nevertheless, in 2008/09 when rains were unusually poor, the *wereda* Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Office (DPPO) distributed emergency food aid to the poorest households (respondents TF8, TM10, TF11). Consequently, these households were able to meet their short-term consumption requirements without selling productive assets.

Farmers with the ideal set of agricultural inputs

Farmers with the 'ideal' set of agricultural inputs constitute a small proportion of the community. The land policy provides a form of protection for these farmers by guaranteeing land access when faced with community-wide or household-specific shocks. When shocks are relatively minor, an 'ideal' household's resources, plus the provisions of the land policy, which allows limited rental, can be sufficient to overcome the short-term effects of the shock and recover autonomous production. However, this is not always the case. While households with the ideal set of inputs are, on the whole, among the best off in the community, many use purchased inputs and, consequently, production of a marketed surplus is an imperative to ensure household reproduction. Both household-specific and community-wide shocks can threaten this reproduction, forcing households to sell productive assets such as oxen or even, in exceptional circumstances, land.

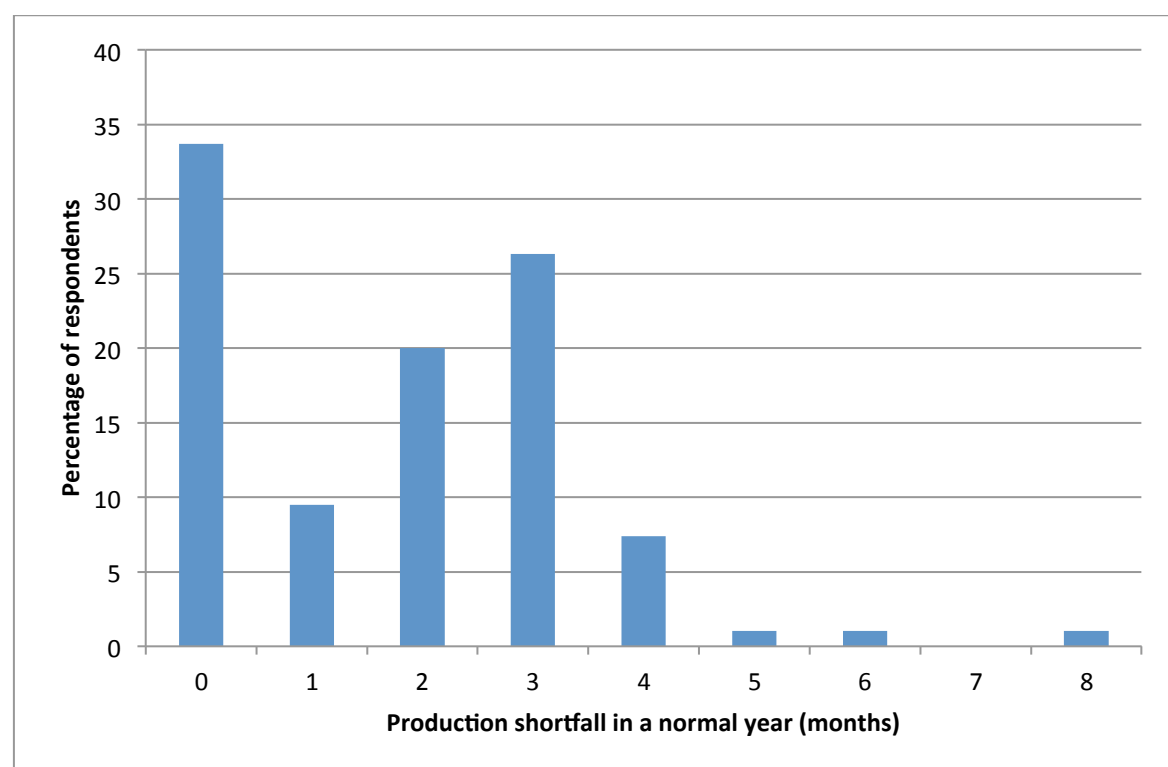
³⁶ In 2004, 66 per cent said there was enough rain at the beginning of the season, 56 per cent during and 50 per cent said that rains stopped on time. In 2009, although most respondents reported being satisfied with the rainfall, it would appear that the questions regarding food shortages and those regarding rainfall refer to different periods. The questionnaire was conducted in September 2009 and so when asked about rainfall in the last agricultural season, respondents would likely answer with respect to the June to September 2009 production. In contrast, when asked about food shortages in the past year, respondents would answer with reference to the drought-affected June to September 2008 production. The same problem would not have affected the 2004 round, which was conducted in May 2004.

Figure 6.2. Months of food shortage in the previous year in Turufe Kechema



Source: ERHS

Figure 6.3. Months in a normal year in which own production is insufficient for consumption in Turufe Kechema



Source: ERHS 2009

An example is provided by TM5, an Oromo in his forties. He previously approximated the 'ideal', farming 0.75 hectares of his own land and 0.75 hectares for his mother. However, in 2004 when required to pay a relative's medical expenses, he sold his land to a young couple, TF1 and TM3. When the land was registered in 2005, TF1 claimed the land as her own and, since TM5 did not object, the LAC registered the land to TF1, despite being aware that it previously belonged to TM5. During fieldwork TM5 filed a dispute, claiming that he had only rented the land to TM3 and that it had not been returned. The elders tasked with resolving the dispute, concluding that the land had been sold, attempted to find a compromise and recommended splitting the land, giving 0.25 hectares to TF1 and returning 0.5 hectares to TM5 (TWE elders 2002 (Ethiopian Calendar - EC)). Nevertheless, both parties refused to accept the decision and the case has since passed to the *wereda* court. The elders and the court are caught between competing legal arguments—either recognising the land certificate as proof of ownership and TF1 as the owner, and in doing so sanctioning an illegal sale, or ignoring the land certificate. According to one of the elders, who was also *kebele* vice-chairman, the elders attempted to protect both parties by splitting the land, since they were aware that if the sale was proven in court, the land would be confiscated and redistributed to the landless (respondent TK2).

In addition to household-specific shocks, 'ideal' households are the most likely to be affected by output price shocks, given that they produce the greatest surplus for sale. Although cereal prices were high during fieldwork, grain markets are extremely volatile. For example, 29 respondents to the 2004 ERHS reported a major drop in output prices and problems selling produce in 2001/02, when high production nationally resulted in a collapse in maize prices. Nevertheless, the government took no action to compensate farmers and, in the absence of private crop insurance, 21 respondents reported that the shock caused them to sell productive assets. While one objective of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) is to stabilise crop prices, during fieldwork in early 2010, the ECX had not started to trade in grains. The absence of any means of stabilising or guaranteeing output prices therefore misses an opportunity for the government to combine social and economic objectives, providing protection for farmers who produce a surplus, at the same time as supporting investment in increased production.

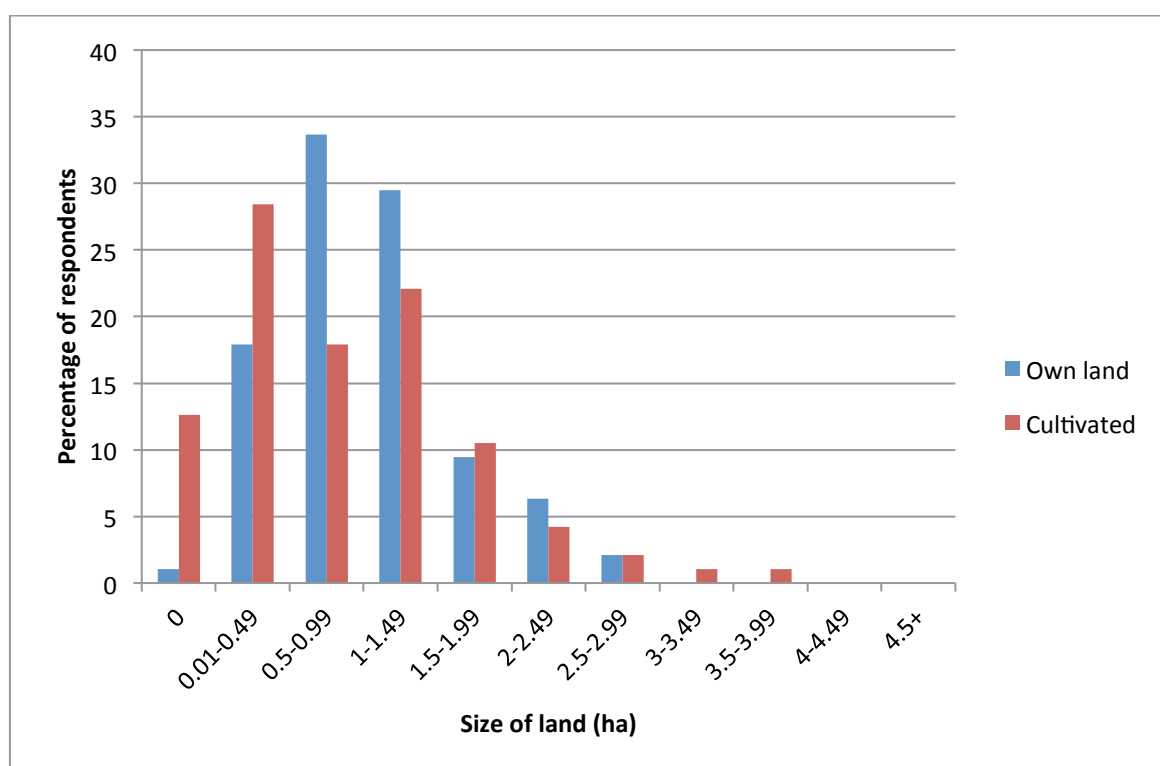
Households with the ideal set of inputs are excluded from targeted, emergency relief during production shocks. Although these relatively wealthy households may not be in danger of failing to meet subsistence requirements as a direct result of such shocks, many households invest in improved inputs and serious damage to their crops could endanger their ability to reproduce from year to year. Consequently, even in the best case scenario—that of 'ideal' households—the land policy is a limited social protection tool that provides modest protection and does little to address the actual short-term challenges presented by a shock.

Many farmers with the ideal set of inputs do, nevertheless, seek to expand their production through land transfers. On the whole, these relatively wealthy farmers prefer to rent rather than sharecrop since the fixed rent, in the context of relatively reliable production, allows them to capture a greater proportion of the production. Nevertheless, if land is only available to sharecrop, wealthy farmers do engage in such arrangements. An example is TM16, who is in his fifties. He has 1.75 hectares, which he received during *Derg* redistributions. In addition, he rents 0.75 hectares, which in 2010 cost 4,800 *birr* per hectare, and uses improved seeds and fertiliser. He has educated all his children who now work in urban areas and, consequently, he has taken on

a young man from Turufe to help him farm. In return for working on TM16's land, the worker is allocated 0.25 hectares and is allowed to use TM16's oxen to plough other farmland that he has sharecropped. Despite being recognised as one of the most successful farmers in Turufe, TM16 only hires one worker and cultivates 2.5 hectares.

On average, households with the ideal set of inputs rent and sharecrop in the most land, considerably more than those with the basic set of inputs. Meanwhile those lacking male labour and oxen transfer out land on average. As such, it would appear that land transfers are commonly a means for relatively wealthy farmers to expand their cultivation, increasing inequality, rather than a means for poor households to obtain sufficient land to meet their subsistence requirements. This finding is supported by figure 6.4, which shows that inequality in land access increases slightly after land transfers are taken into account. However, I found no evidence of farmers accumulating large farms, which require them to hire multiple labourers on a long-term basis. According to the 2009 ERHS, on average, 'ideal' households hired a total of four worker-days per agricultural season. While this might provide an additional source of employment for a few farmers unable to meet their subsistence from their own land, this hired labour supplements household labour, rather than constituting a clear class distinction between landholders and labourers. Indeed, in the 2009 ERHS the farmer with the most cultivated land farmed just 3.75 hectares. That farmer had 2.75 hectares of his own land, was 60 with five sons between 14 and 27, and four oxen. He was therefore firmly in the 'ideal' category. Nevertheless, with a total of six children he will be unable to pass on his ideal set of agricultural inputs to all his children.

Figure 6.4. Distribution of land access after exchange in Turufe Kechema



Source: ERHS 2009

There are several possible reasons why wealthy farmers do not cultivate larger tracts of land. First, the current land distribution and the small size of landholdings mean that there are

diminishing returns to renting or sharecropping in additional land. In order for a farmer to increase his cultivation, he would need to negotiate a separate agreement, to be renewed each year, with a different landholder for approximately each 0.5 hectares. This land would likely be spread across the village rather than in one contiguous farm. Inevitably, a point would come at which the added benefit from transferring in more land would be offset by the additional supervision costs of monitoring the work of labourers on plots located far apart from one another. Second, there are strong pressures from the government and the community against land consolidation. In line with the peasant security discourse, the local government expects landholders to cultivate their land themselves and several respondents said that the government strongly discouraged landholders from renting. At the same time, there is a strong collective memory of the exploitative *neftegna-gebbar* system, which translates into popular support for the land policy and negative views of consolidation.

The differential impacts of the land policy by gender and age

The land policy aims to ensure that households lacking male labour retain their land and with it an opportunity to earn an agricultural income through temporary transfers. In many cases, these households are close to subsistence levels and are risk averse, prioritising a reliable source of food. Consequently, they tend to favour sharecropping rather than cash rental, due to the uncertainty of local food markets. Given the great demand for land and a considerable shortage of supply, most land transfers are therefore sharecrops.

There were numerous examples among my respondents of female-headed households (respondents TM1, TF3) and elderly landholders (respondents TF8, TM10, TM15, TM20, TM25) who lacked male labour and sharecropped their land to male farmers. Indeed, these households probably constitute the main source of land for farmers looking to expand production. Nevertheless, as a form of social protection, sharecropping is inherently disadvantageous to women and the elderly since the landholder earns just half the production of an able-bodied man with otherwise comparable resources.

Prior to registration, the lack of proof of ownership constituted a threat to female and elderly landholders sharecropping out land, with sharecroppers often claiming the land as their own. This was particularly problematic for women who, under customary law, had few land rights and received little support from elders or formal dispute resolution procedures. This vulnerability has, however, reduced due to changes to formal and informal laws. As previously discussed, land proclamations now entitle men and women to equal land rights, and therefore equal protection from the land policy. In addition, in 2005 the *wereda* administration and the *Aba Gadaa* jointly announced changes to customary law, prohibiting 'harmful' practices, such as female circumcision, and reforms to customary tenure (respondents TM8, TK2, TF5, OR2). These changes gave women the right to refuse inheritance by a male relative if their husband died, as well as the right to keep land when living outside the *kebele*, meaning that they do not lose land when they marry. My respondent in the regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism acknowledged that the reforms came, 'mostly from the government's initiatives' and were part of the regional government's desire to 'use the elders for many purposes' because when the regional government works through the *gadaa* it is more successful than the local government (respondent OR2).

One example of the positive contribution of these changes is provided by a land dispute resolved during fieldwork. The father of the plaintiff, TF2, was Eritrean. He had lived in Turufe for many years and obtained 1.5 hectares under the *Derg*. In 1998 when the Ethio-Eritrean war began, he and other Eritreans were required to leave the country. While some Eritreans sold their land to local people (respondent TM21), TF2's father arranged sharecrops with four farmers. With the father gone and both of his children studying in towns, the farmers had no one to share their crop with and assumed that the land was now theirs (respondents TM1, TM2, TM6, TF3). Nevertheless, TF2 returned to Turufe to claim the land when it was registered and demanded her share of the crop. When they refused, she registered a dispute and the elders found in her favour based on the land certificate. In an attempt to reconcile the parties, the elders asked that the same farmers continue to sharecrop the land (Contract signed by respondents TF2, TM1, TM2, TF3 n.d.). However, the farmers still refused to share the crop, according to TF2's husband because she is a woman and they thought they could 'just ignore her'. Nevertheless, she brought the case to the *wereda* court, which also supported her claim and evicted the farmers (respondents TF2, TM1).

The need for consent for widows to be inherited by a relative of their deceased husband also seems to have improved women's land rights. The husband of one respondent, TF5, died in 2006, shortly after the reforms. Both her husband's family and local elders tried to convince her to marry another male relative. Nonetheless, being aware of her right to consent, she refused and her husband's land was registered in her name. In addition, having been recognised for her role in promoting women's rights, she has been appointed chairperson of the *kebele* women's association.

A contrasting case, however, is that of TF4, who moved to Turufe to marry and had three children before her husband died seven years ago. The couple farmed land donated by her father-in-law, which she continues to use. However, the land was never formally transferred and is registered to the father-in-law, leaving her completely dependent on him. Since her husband's death, the father-in-law has been pressurising her to marry one of his other sons and, when she refused, he took the dispute to the elders, who agreed that she should re-marry. TF4 took the case to the *wereda* Women's Affairs Office, which paid her costs at the *wereda* court. TF4 won the case and, since the changes announced by the *Aba Gadaa*, the elders now support her. Nevertheless, she remains dependent on her father-in-law, and claims that he physically threatens her and steals her crops. TF4 believes that she is exceptional in refusing to re-marry and, despite the reforms, most widows are still forced to do so.

Both formal and customary rules have been changed to protect women's right to decide whom they marry and, when brought to dispute resolution, these rights do seem to be upheld. In part, these changes are a by-product of government co-optation of the *gadaa*, providing an unusual case where informal institutions have a positive impact on women's land rights. Nevertheless, a woman's capacity to resist her husband's family depends on a number of factors in which women are frequently disadvantaged. First, given the common failure to update land certificates, informal land access remains common, in particular for women (other examples include TF4 and TF7), making legal defence problematic. Second, given that most women move to another area to marry outside their clan, they often have little local support when confronting their husband's family (Kiros and White 2004). Finally, early marriage interrupts girls' education, in many cases limiting their literacy, knowledge of their rights and consequent ability to pursue a legal case.

In cases of polygynous households, land registration is based on agreement within the household. Members of the LAC report that households frequently divide land based on the number of children supported by each wife (respondents TK6, TK7, TW2). The man and one wife appear on one certificate, while each of the other wives has their own certificate. Clearly this system provides considerable potential for uneven distribution or neglect of less favoured wives. Nevertheless, none of my respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the distribution and I found no evidence of disputes.

Landless households and access to an agricultural livelihood

For the growing landless population, land registration and the moratorium on redistribution exclude them from land access and undermine the constitutional right to land. The government's expectation is that landless men rent or sharecrop the land of those unable to farm. In most cases landless farmers must sharecrop, since they lack money to pay rental fees up front. Many also have difficulty accessing improved inputs due to a shortage of credit and restrictions on joining the cooperative. As such, yields produced by these farmers tend to be lower than those of wealthy farmers using improved inputs. Indeed, many young, landless men not only lack access to money but also oxen, which makes it very difficult to access any land (Yohannes Habtu 1997). In addition, the expectation that the landless rely on sharecropping has important gender implications, since women have no means of earning an agricultural income, except through dependence on a husband.

Landholders might be expected to seek sharecrops with farmers that have access to improved inputs and therefore achieve the highest yields. Nevertheless, some landholders help young relatives by giving sharecrops, even though they frequently lack the best inputs. There are many young farmers sharecropping in land and using sub-optimal inputs—local seed varieties and little or no fertiliser (respondents TF3, TM15, TM25). While sharecropping can provide access to an agricultural livelihood for young, landless farmers, in line with the government's social policy objectives, in most cases these transactions will not contribute to the government's objective of maximising community production, which would require the transfer of land to the most productive farmers using purchased improved inputs. One example is TM25, a Tigrawi in his early twenties. He attends school in the mornings and sharecrops in 1.5 hectares from four people, mostly other Tigrawi who are unable to farm themselves. In addition, he rents one hectare from a family that needed money for food. Nevertheless, he uses neither fertiliser nor improved seeds.

I did find a few examples of landless farmers who rented and sharecropped land, using improved inputs and producing a surplus for sale. These cases appear to be exceptions, however, since both were the children of wealthy farmers who helped them with money, access to improved inputs and oxen. For instance, TM13 is an Oromo in his early twenties. When he turned 18, his father gave him 0.25 hectares from his 1.25 hectares and lent him his oxen. At first, TM13 rented additional land just for the short rainy season as the rent of 200-300 *birr* for 0.5 hectares was much cheaper than for the whole year. He grew potatoes, which he stored in his father's barn until the price was high, selling at a considerable profit. He reinvested his profits, renting more land for the whole season and now rents 2.5 hectares. His father is a member of the cooperative, and obtained improved seeds and fertiliser for his son. TM13 does the majority of the farming himself but hires a few labourers at harvest time.

Employment opportunities outside Turufe for young people are quite limited. A minority who complete education—up to grade four in Turufe, grade eight in Wetera and grade twelve in Kuyera—have been able to find jobs in urban areas, in particular in government organisations. For the majority who do not complete secondary education, potential work in towns includes day labour in construction for men, and domestic work and prostitution for women (Bethlehem Tekola 2005). In recent years, a number of women from Turufe have also sought work on flower farms in the Rift Valley 100-150km north of Turufe (see chapter nine).

The Oromiya government also instructed *kebele* administrations to form landless associations to conduct group income-earning activities on communal land. In Turufe, the administration allocated five hectares, previously used to collect firewood, to two landless associations. The associations have reforested the area and plan to sell the wood when the trees mature. Each association has 50 members selected based on their lack of land and education (respondents TM9, TF12, TM13, TM15). Members paid 20-30 *birr* for a tree nursery (respondent TM22) and the associations expect to sell the trees in about three years, earning 50,000-100,000 *birr* (respondents TM9, TF12, TM22). Nevertheless, at 1,000-2,000 *birr* per member, the landless association will at best provide a supplemental income, rather than constituting a real solution to the landlessness problem. In addition, though there is no evidence of formal discrimination against women, local custom that sees farming as a male activity limited female participation to 3-5 women out of 100 members (respondents TM9, TF10, TM14, TM22). Meanwhile, the requirement for members to work on the land means that participation is conditional on residence in Turufe (respondent TM9).

Despite the severe and growing land shortage there is no resettlement programme. Several years ago the *kebele* made a list of landless households for resettlement but, for reasons unknown to the local administration, the programme never began.

Farmers with the basic set of agricultural inputs

Landholders with a basic set of agricultural inputs—some land, male labour and at least one ox—constitute a large proportion of the population. Though autonomous producers, many of these farmers' landholdings are barely adequate for their own subsistence. At the same time, most are extremely vulnerable and, when faced with shocks, may be forced to sell productive assets such as oxen, putting in doubt future autonomous production. Given the substantial size of this group of farmers, they are, however, vital to ADLI's economic objectives, since for community production to be maximised, these farmers must either adopt improved inputs or transfer their land to farmers able to do so.

To sustain use of improved inputs, farmers must produce a marketed surplus to invest in inputs the following year, in addition to food for household consumption. The government programme that provided credit for improved inputs catered to this group, helping farmers to manage seasonal cash flow problems. Nevertheless, many farmers were unable to produce sufficient food for the household and a surplus. Consequently, many farmers did not repay their debts and the programme was abandoned. Subsequently, many farmers outside the 'ideal' utilise only small amounts of fertiliser and local seed varieties, because such inputs 'are too expensive' (respondent TM11). While government policy prescribes paths to maximise the productivity of land held by

other categories of farmers, at present the existence of this substantial group of farmers in food secure sites is ignored.

The total production of the community could be raised by transferring land to farmers with the 'ideal' set of inputs. Indeed, the promotion of land rental markets by some policymakers could be interpreted as favouring such transactions. Nevertheless, these transfers would contribute to class differentiation, and are in tension with the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses, which currently dominate implementation by the *wereda* and *kebele*.

Table 6.4 presents data from the 2009 ERHS and shows farmers' access to agricultural inputs, after land transfers are taken into account. This table shows that the vast majority of landholders with the basic set of inputs retain their landholdings. For farmers who lack improved inputs to transfer their land, landholders would need to earn more by transferring their land to a wealthy farmer who uses improved inputs than they do by farming the land themselves without improved inputs. However, my respondents were divided between those who believed that a landholder without improved seeds would be better off farming the land within the household without purchased inputs (respondents TM6, TM21, TM23) and those that thought it best to sharecrop out the land to a farmer with improved seeds (respondents TF11, TM27, TK8).

Table 6.4. Access to agricultural inputs after land transfers in Turufe Kechema

Percentage of respondents	Own land	Land farmed (after transfers)
'Ideal' set of inputs (1ha, labour, pair oxen)	24	28
Some land but no male labour	11	7
Land and labour but no ox	33	24
Basic set of inputs (some land, labour and one ox)	32	29
No land	0	12

Source: ERHS 2009

Alternatives to government prescribed paths

Certain households pursue strategies to improve their circumstances beyond those outlined by government policy. For those with insufficient landholdings, one option is to informally buy land from those in need of money, undermining the protection provided by the land policy. According to several respondents, in addition to the case discussed above, such transactions are not unusual (respondents TM2, TK3, TK5, TK6, TK7). As long as the transactions are relatively small and are not brought directly to the attention of the *kebele* administration, government officials interviewed appeared content to turn a blind eye (respondents TK2, TK3). Nevertheless, land certificates make the permanent transfer of land considerably harder, requiring the buyer to forge a land certificate.

Another strategy for a minority of respondents with employment opportunities in urban areas has been to sharecrop out their land, earning some income from the land, while working in town. The *kebele* administration has approved these practices, although in Oromiya they fall into a legal grey area. All relevant proclamations refer only to rental, making no mention of sharecropping and no distinction between the two practices. However, the federal land proclamation (FDRE 2005a, para. 8[1]) does stipulate that landholders are not allowed to rent out sufficient land to

displace the landholder and a senior policymaker in the Oromiya Bureau of Land and Environmental Protection maintained that the intention of the regional policy is to prevent such absenteeism.

Social policy and ethnicity

Longstanding ethnic tensions in Turufe have resulted in land disputes, with important implications for the protection provided by the land policy to different ethnic groups. The dispute involving the Kembata illustrates these tensions and local peoples' conceptualisation of ethnicity. The dispute began 25 years ago. Unsurprisingly given the time that has passed, recollection of the original events by my respondents is unclear and in cases contradictory. Depending on the respondent, the original disagreement was caused either by Oromo thieves (*shifta*), who were stealing from local people, both Kembata and Oromo (respondent TM26), or Oromo farmers who allowed their cattle to graze on the harvest of Kembata farmers (respondents TK5, TM12). Either way, when the Kembata reported the crime, the Oromo defendants were imprisoned and ultimately executed. According to some Oromo respondents, the Kembata peasant association chairman signed the execution papers (respondent TK5), although he denied this, claiming that they were executed merely because the *Derg* was 'cruel' (respondent TM18).

The aim of customary dispute resolution by elders is to find a compromise that promotes long-term settlement and avoids resentment, rather than an absolute decision for or against either party (Mamo Hebo 2006). Nevertheless, the Kembata by-passed customary dispute resolution, since they believed that the elders were biased towards the local clan, the *Weyrera*, and reported the matter directly to the peasant association (respondent TM18). The Arssi Oromo, meanwhile, consider the pursuit of justice through the courts to be disrespectful of customary laws, and the Kembata's actions probably deepened their resentment (respondents TM12, TM18, see also Mamo Hebo 2006).

When the *Derg* lost power in 1991, there was a period of instability exacerbated by local conflict between the EPRDF and Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) (respondent TM1). According to the *Weyrera*, a crime had been committed by the entire Kembata 'clan', and consequently retribution should be exacted against the whole 'clan', rather than just those directly responsible (respondents TM4, TK5). The *Weyrera* called on other Arssi Oromo to join them in attacking the Kembata, burning their houses (respondent TM17), with the result that 3,601 households across 10 *kebele* and several *wereda* were expelled (Oromiya Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development 1998 (EC)). In Turufe, 117 of 413 households at the time were Kembata (Getachew Fule and Mesfin Tadesse 1996), and although a few who had married Oromo were allowed to stay, the majority were evicted (respondents TM3, TM12, TM18).

The Kembata land was distributed among the local people who had evicted them (respondent TM3). However, a few Tigrawi farmers also obtained some land by payment (respondents TM23, TM21, & WeD Household Poverty Dynamics module). A few evicted Kembata moved to Kembata zone, in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), though most settled on the outskirts of nearby Shashemene, initially receiving support from the *wereda* DPPO and the Catholic Mission. DPPO support was terminated in 1998 as the *wereda* did not think that the

evicted farmers should receive permanent government support (Shashemene city administration 1997 (EC)). The office also refused to provide a letter of support required to obtain NGO support (Office of the Federal Ombudsman 1999a (EC)), since NGOs have agreed to provide assistance only to those on government lists (Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus 1997 (EC)).

In 1992 the Kembata registered the dispute with the *wereda* Agricultural Office, which is responsible for land administration (respondent TM17). They have subsequently lodged appeals at higher levels of government, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), the House of Representatives, the Prime Minister's Office and the Federal Ombudsman's Office. According to federal and regional laws, which make no mention of ethnicity, the case is clear. The last land redistribution conducted by the *Derg* is accepted as final and any ethnic minorities that received land have the same rights as 'indigenous' Oromo (ONRG 2001, respondent OR1). Consequently, the land previously held by the Kembata should be returned. To date this has not happened. Although each government administration has found in favour of the Kembata, no one appears to have considered returning their land. Indeed, the *wereda* has issued land certificates to the farmers occupying the contested land and, in doing so, has validated the occupation and, implicitly, the removal of an ethnic group.

Government agencies have proposed a number of alternatives. In 1997, the Prime Minister's Office directed the Oromiya Government to give each person one hectare elsewhere in Shashemene *wereda*, but this was never implemented due to the land shortage (The evicted farmers of Shashemene *wereda* 1995 (EC)). Subsequently, the federal government instructed the Oromiya and SNNPR Governments to allocate forest and communal land on the border of the two regions (Oromiya Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development 1998 (EC), Office of the Federal Ombudsman 1999b (EC)). However, the regional governments protested since the land in question was already subject to ethnic tensions between Sidama and Oromo residents (MoARD 1998 (EC), Office of the Federal Ombudsman 1999b (EC)). Finally, the MoARD recommended giving the Kembata priority in the SNNPR or Oromiya resettlement programmes (MoARD 1998 (EC)), which would take them far away to either Bench Maji, SNNPR or Wellega, Oromiya. The Kembata have refused and continue to campaign for the return of their original land.

According to Oromo respondents, the conflict was directly precipitated by the deaths of Oromo farmers. However, Kembata respondents believe that this was merely a pretext (respondent TM17). They argue that the eviction was the result of the land shortage and the *Weyrera* belief that the land belonged to their clan. According to my respondents,

'The Oromos made a pretext but they were saying that they needed the land for their children. They burned the houses of the Kembata and stole from them' (respondent TM18, a Kembata).

'The reason for the problems is the land that the people occupy. The Oromo say, "let alone for you, the land is not enough for us"' (respondent TM24, a Kembata).

A minority of Oromo respondents supported these claims, recognising the damaging effect of migration,

'Migration has caused me a problem because the other people [other ethnic groups] have claimed the land as their own. The local community told them [the Kembata] that they had come for treatment [at the hospital] not to take the land of the local people' (respondent TM4, an Oromo).

The ethnic problems in Turufe pre-date ethnic federalism and the eviction occurred during a period of instability and state weakness. Clearly then, the conflict cannot be solely attributed to ethnic federalism. Nevertheless, several respondents from different ethnic groups pointed out that the ethnic nationalist discourse employed by the EPRDF and the OLF polarised the community, contributing to an expectation that ethnic groups should return to 'their' newly created ethnic regions,

'This government devised the federal system. It is a cause, there are other causes which are the root, but federalism exacerbated the problem. It divided the community. Those who did not speak the local language were expected to return to their own homeland' (respondent TM26, a Kembata).

'All the people were expected to go to their original land [at that time]. The Kembata originally came here for treatment for leprosy. But they used this chance to get land here' (respondent TM1, an Oromo).

'When the government changed many people were expected to go back to their homeland. Some left voluntarily, some forcefully. Most Kembata were elders and they did not have force to defend themselves' (respondent TM23, a Tigrawi).

The EPRDF and other groups promoted an ethnic nationalist discourse, emphasising ethnic oppression in Ethiopian history, the use of local languages in administration and the self-determination of ethnic groups. This discourse resonated with the primordial, territorial conceptualisation of ethnicity implicit in the clan ownership of land. In the context of land shortages and resentment at immigration, the execution of the Oromo served as a trigger for the evictions.

Subsequent attempts at dispute resolution further highlight the tensions in the government's policies on land and ethnicity. The federal government seems to have acknowledged the territorial implications of ethnic federalism by suggesting resettlement of the Kembata from Oromiya to SNNPR, where Kembata zone is located. However, the displaced Kembata had been living in Oromiya for up to fifty years and many of the younger generations might never have been to their supposed 'home' region, and may not even speak the Kembata language. SNNPR, meanwhile, comprises at least 45 ethnic groups that were combined into one region based on administrative requirements (Vaughan 2003). Given the scarcity of land in Kembata, the government attempted to 'return' the Kembata to SNNPR by finding them land in either Sidama or Bench-Maji with whose populations they share no linguistic or other ties.

Although only the Kembata were evicted in 1991, some respondents claimed that the other minorities were also threatened with eviction, but were armed and able to defend themselves (respondents TM17, TM23, and Getachew Fule and Mesfin Tadesse 1996). In part, the Tigrawi are resented because they have been successful in agriculture. Several Oromo and Tigrawi

respondents reported that Tigrawi farmers are more hardworking, seeking to rent in land, whereas many Oromo rent out their land, using the money to drink *areqi* and chew chat. Indeed, according to the 2009 ERHS, Tigrawi farmers own more livestock than other ethnic groups, and rent and sharecrop in additional land, whereas, Oromo and Amhara farmers both rent or sharecrop out land, on average.

During the 2005 national elections, the Tigrawi were concerned that victory for the Oromo National Congress (ONC), an Oromo party which supports the principles of ethnic federalism, would have led to retribution against the Tigrawi who are associated with the EPRDF (Yohannes Gezahegn *et al.* 2006). The victory of the EPRDF ensured that this did not occur but they remain concerned about the future,

'The local people have a great sense of belonging to the land. They divided the Kembata land amongst themselves. I fear that if this government fails, their eyes are on our land and the same thing may happen again. When there is a transfer of power, if there is instability there may be a window of opportunity. Currently the government is in control so I do not think that this could happen' (respondent TM20, a Tigrawi).

While many Oromo respondents were reluctant to discuss the problems, a few respondents were more candid. For example, one respondent acknowledged that the government prevents the Oromo taking further action at the moment but that the fall of the government could bring change,

'If we get the chance to remove them [the Tigrawi and other ethnic groups] we would not give them even one day in Turufe. They [the current 'Tigrawi' government] are killing our children ... [Oromo] Children here mix Amharic and Afaan Oromo, they are not like the Wellega who speak pure Afaan Oromo. So we want to remove the other groups—it is beyond just land but it is to realise our right to language and culture. It is to avert such problems that we want to remove the others, to avert this cultural distortion' (respondent TM1, an Oromo).

The government has not carried through the territorial implications of ethnic federalism to their logical conclusion and, in Turufe, acts as a barrier to further ethnic conflict. Indeed, as part of the changes to customary law instigated by the government in 2005, elders can now be selected from any ethnic group, rather than just the local Arssi Oromo. Nonetheless, the ethnic nationalist discourse employed by the EPRDF contributed to the eviction of the Kembata, while the subsequent response of the federal and regional administrations has failed to protect minority land rights, reinforcing the sense that the Kembata are outsiders in Oromiya.

Conclusions

Local government officials implementing the land policy must negotiate competing discourses on land. In addition to those identified in chapter four—private property, peasant security, class homogeneity and gender equality—discourses promoted by societal groups have also been

influential. These include the communal tenure implied by the clan ownership of land, which resonates with ethnic nationalism.

Turufe has experienced rapid population growth and considerable in-migration in recent decades, leading to a major land shortage. At the same time, pressures for agricultural commercialisation deriving from market access and the potential of improved inputs translates into demand for land. However, while land tenure has become increasingly individualised under the EPRDF, demand for farmland has not resulted in significant steps towards privatisation, as predicted by property rights theory. Indeed, local government implementation of the land policy remains dominated by the peasant security discourse, with local policymakers invoking paternalist arguments to justify state intervention to restrict individual choices, even going beyond the regional land proclamation.

Nevertheless, the resulting land shortage has meant that key government social and economic objectives are in tension with one another. Under the *Derg*, frequent land redistributions ensured equality but created landholdings that for many were insufficient to guarantee an agricultural livelihood. While the moratorium on redistributions has slowed this division, it has led to growing inequality between landholders and the landless, which overlaps with inter-generational and gender divisions. Similarly, the protection of farmers from distress sales and prevention of class differentiation are increasingly in tension with the objective of raising agricultural productivity. A minority of relatively wealthy farmers frequently use improved inputs, producing high yields and a surplus. However, the division of land into sub-economic plots means that a substantial proportion of farmers are unable to produce the marketed surplus required to sustain investment in improved inputs and, regardless of supply problems, would be unlikely to adopt improved inputs. Meanwhile, government restrictions on sale and rental prevent land transfers to 'ideal' households for whom investment in improved inputs would be viable.

The result is a social policy that affects different groups in very different ways. For farmers with access to the ideal set of agricultural inputs, the land policy provides a limited form of protection from minor shocks that ensures their continued access to land and an agricultural livelihood. Nevertheless, the shortage of land and other agricultural inputs means that for the vast majority of households, the land policy ensures only a partial subsistence and leaves them vulnerable to even modest shocks. This social policy also contains an inherent gender bias, since households lacking male labour are expected to sharecrop out, halving their income, and landless women have no means of accessing an agricultural income except through dependence on a man. Nevertheless, recent government initiatives regarding formal and customary laws have supported women's land claims and consequently the protection they receive from the land policy. These positive contributions are in part the by-product of government attempts to co-opt the *gadaa* institution. Meanwhile, discourses of ethnic nationalism promoted both by the EPRDF and other ethnic movements have also been influential in Turufe, resonating with the existing clan-based customary land administration. These discourses have exacerbated an existing conflict, leading to ethnic division in the security provided by the land policy.

Policy implementation is deeply imbued with the state paternalism that is inherent to the peasant security discourse. According to local government officials, farmers are too lazy, ignorant or economically weak to make choices in their own best interests. Consequently, the government

must reduce the available choices, leaving just those that fit with the behaviour expected in government discourse. It is also notable that there are few organisations which are truly independent of government that might provide an alternative source of representation. Though formally autonomous, the farmers' cooperative and the *gadaa* maintain strong links to the government, while no opposition political parties are active, and even NGOs and churches providing relief support only those on government lists. As a result, almost the entire population is directly or indirectly dependent on state organisations for basic elements of their livelihoods, from land, seeds and fertiliser to emergency assistance and participation in communal associations. Consequently, the minimal security provided by government social policy comes at the cost of dependence on the state.

Finally, the re-establishment and partial incorporation of the *gadaa* into government hierarchies is of considerable political significance. *Gadaa* has been idealised by Oromo nationalists for its democratic and participative nature, and its emphasis on achieving consensus through discussion (Bassi 1996). Consequently, *gadaa* has become a key part of Oromo political identity, with many Oromo nationalists aspiring to an independent Oromiya governed by a form of *gadaa* (Baxter 1994, Bassi 1996). In co-opting *gadaa*, the EPRDF has prevented the emergence of an alternative source of political authority, instead using it for its own policy purposes, including, in the example discussed here, to enhance women's land rights.

Social protection and ‘graduation’ in a food insecure site

Geblen *tabiya*³⁷ is based around a narrow promontory at an altitude of 2,700m, which steeply descends to 2,000m in the surrounding valleys. Much of the agricultural land lies on narrow terraces on these hillsides and consequently is highly fragmented, with an average of 5 plots per hectare, according to the 2009 Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS). The area is subject to erratic rainfall, with frequent droughts broken by heavy downpours. The short *sugum* rains (March-April) rarely take place, while the main *kiremti* rains (June-August) are unreliable. Despite the difficult conditions, population density is extremely high. Due to the mountainous topography, intense land utilisation and the deluges that take place when it does rain, soil erosion is a major problem, and the soil on much of the land is only a few inches deep. The main crop is barley. A few farmers also grow wheat and maize.

Geblen lies 20km along a poorly-maintained dry weather road from Edaga Hamus, the nearest market town. Public transport to Edaga Hamus goes daily from Adi Kelebus, 4km from Geblen. From Edaga Hamus it is a further 16km to the capital of Saesi-Tseada Imba *wereda*, Freweyni, and 15km to the zonal capital and largest town in the area, Adigrat. The *tabiya* is 30km from the Eritrean border and, before the 1998-2000 Ethiopia-Eritrea war, many people from Geblen travelled to Asmara for work. The expulsion of Ethiopians from Eritrea and the closure of the border damaged the local economy.

As a result of these factors, Geblen is an extreme case. It is one of the most food insecure *tabiya* in a *wereda* and region which themselves are among the most food insecure in the country. Past research found that the 1984/85 famine led to numerous deaths in the community, and Geblen has experienced chronic food shortages before and since (Kiros Gebre Egziabher and Solomon Tegegne 1996). As such, Geblen presents a stern challenge for Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) and the Food Security Programme (FSP), which aim to raise household production and resolve the food insecurity problem.

Partly due to its remote location, the area around Geblen was chosen as one of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front’s (TPLF) first bases in its fight against the *Derg*. The TPLF has been active in the area since 1976 (Young 1997) and Geblen has been under TPLF administration since the

³⁷ In Tigray, *tabiya* are the equivalent of *kebele* in other parts of Ethiopia.

late 1970s. Based on the TPLF's Maoist strategy of living with and gaining support of the peasantry as the key to military success (Young 1997), Geblen is part of an area which comes closest to the revolutionary democratic ideal whereby mass political mobilisation leads to communal collective participation. There are no organisations or groups present who are entirely independent of the party-state.

The *tabiya* is administered by a cabinet, which includes the chairman, vice-chairman and manager, an educated administrator appointed by the *wereda*. The *tabiya* is divided into four *kushet*, each of which has its own cabinet responsible for mobilising the people for community works and to attend community meetings. Each *kushet* selects three elders who play important roles in dispute resolution.

During fieldwork there were two Development Agents (DAs) responsible for plants and animals, while the post of natural resources was vacant. The state-owned microfinance organisation, Dedebeit, is situated in Adi Kelebus and provides finance for extension packages. Land is administered by a five person Land Administration Committee (LAC) and a Land Court, both of which are selected from and by the community. The LAC is responsible for measuring and registering land to landholders. When there are disputes, elders attempt to resolve the dispute and, if the parties involved are unsatisfied with their decision, disputes are heard at the land court.

Although Tigray is relatively ethnically homogeneous, Geblen is home to two main ethnic groups—the Tigrawi and the Irob (see table 7.1). The Irob language is a dialect of Saho (Tsegay Berhe Gebre Libanos 2006). The majority of the 30,000 speakers of the Irob Saho dialect live in the Irob special *wereda*, which borders Saesi-Tseada Imba to the north, while a minority live in Saesi-Tseada Imba itself. In contrast to Tigrigna, a Semitic language, Saho is a Cushitic language spoken in and around the northern Rift Valley in northeast Ethiopia and in Eritrea as far as the Red Sea. The Irob are mostly Christian, both Ethiopian Orthodox and Roman Catholic (Tsegay Berhe Gebre Libanos 2006), while the Tigrawi are predominately Ethiopian Orthodox. The Irob provided support to the TPLF at Marwa during their fight against the *Derg* (Péninou 1998, Souba Hais 1998), and, when the TPLF defeated the *Derg* and created the ethnic federal system, the Irob were given their own special *wereda*.

Table 7.1. Ethnicity in Geblen

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Tigrawi	74	71
Irob	25	24
Other	5	5
Total	104	100

Source: ERHS 2004

The Irob were traditionally pastoralists but have gradually switched to agro-pastoralism and settled cultivation in response to land shortages, using terracing and check dams to farm the steep slopes that they occupy (Tesfay Ghebray Woldemariam 2004, Tsegay Berhe Gebre Libanos 2006). In Geblen, Tigrawi are concentrated in the highest two *kushet* closest to the main road,

while the Irob make up a greater proportion of the population in the lowland and more remote *kushet*. Although the majority of the Irob are Christian, both Catholic and Orthodox, and only a small minority Muslim, according to the 2004 ERHS, in Geblen 56 per cent of the Irob were Muslim with 44 per cent Orthodox Christian and no Catholics. Just 11 per cent of respondents who identified themselves as Tigrawi are Muslim, although this is significantly more than the total for Tigray as a whole, where just 4 per cent are Muslim.

During the Imperial era, land in Geblen was administered according to two tenure systems, *risti* (respondent GM7, see appendix B), which provided land access through membership of a lineage, and *chiguraf-sehabo*, which provided land access based on residence in the community (Kiros Gebre Egziabher and Solomon Tegegne 1996). Elderly respondents noted that land has been scarce in Geblen for as long as anyone can remember. Land redistributions, initially by the *Derg* and then by the TPLF (respondent GM23), wiped out the previous tenure systems, but have been unable to address this shortage.

The agricultural system of production

In Geblen irrigation is an important source of differentiation, enabling those with access to produce two harvests per year, including crops such as onions and tomatoes (respondents GF4, GM4, GM23). There are a number of water sources which provide irrigation for a few farmers, although only 12 per cent of respondents had access to some irrigation according to the 2009 ERHS and none had half a hectare or more. Irrigation sources include several small springs (respondents GM8, GM23), a well (respondent GM4), and a small dam used primarily for drinking water (respondent GM22). The dam and the well were built by the Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat. According to the DAs, there is insufficient groundwater to dig more wells (respondent GT5).

Table 7.2. Access to agricultural inputs in Geblen

	Percentage of respondents
'Ideal' set of inputs (1ha of which 0.5ha irrigated, labour, pair oxen)	0
Some land but no male labour	35
Land and labour but no ox	14
Basic set of inputs (some land, labour and one ox)	51

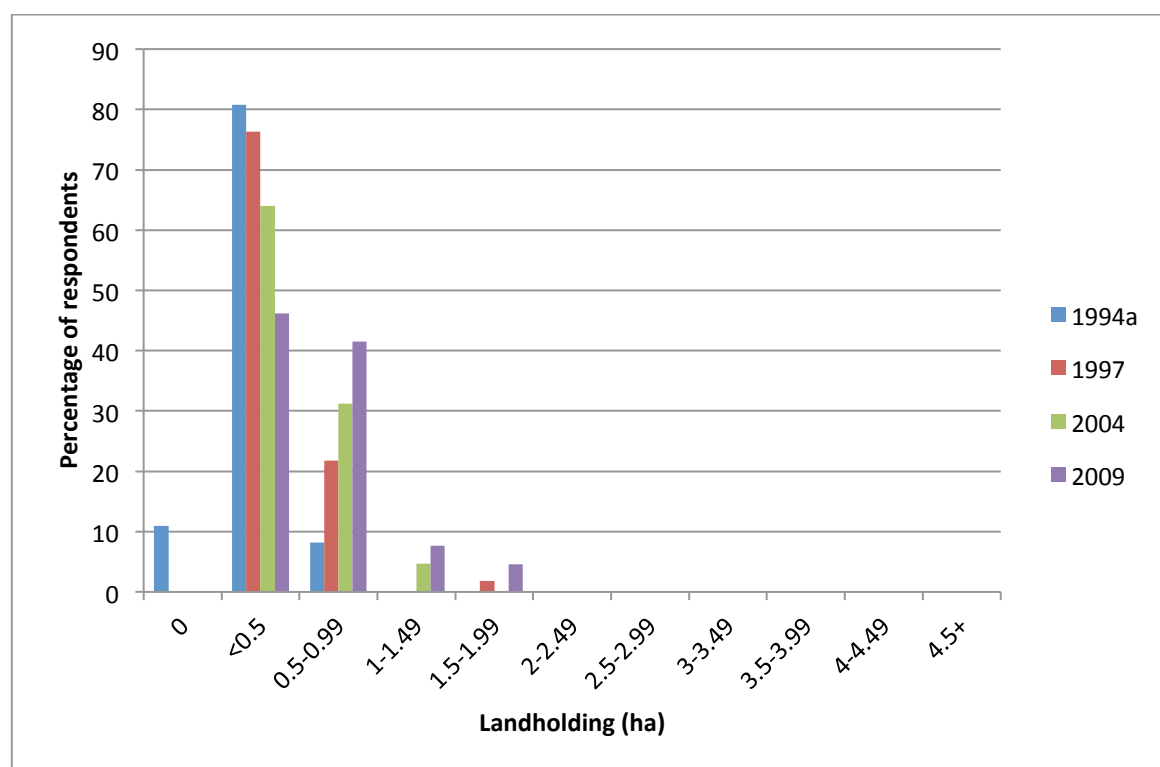
Source: ERHS 2009

The irrigation shortage is one reason why none of the respondents to the 2009 ERHS had access to the ideal set of agricultural inputs—one hectare of land of which 0.5 is irrigated, male labour and a pair of oxen (table 7.2). Indeed, only one of my interview respondents had this ideal set of inputs. Figure 7.1 shows that land shortages are also a major problem, since only a handful of ERHS respondents have one hectare or more and nearly half have less than half a hectare. As such, most households lack sufficient land for any stage of the household cycle. The graph seems to indicate an expansion of landholdings over the rounds of the ERHS. This is surprising given the

longstanding land shortage. If these data are accurate, the expansion could only be the result of the individualisation of communal land which is of little use for crop cultivation.

ERHS sampling was conducted in 1994, soon after the last land redistribution in 1990. Consequently, there are few landless households in the sample. However, according to the *wereda* land administration, out of 630 households in the *tabiya*, 481 have access to some agricultural land, leaving 149, or 24 per cent, landless. The landless include those who have reached adulthood since the last redistribution, demobilised soldiers and migrants who were working in Eritrea but were forced to leave during the war. For these people the only access to agricultural production is by sharecropping the land of those unable to farm.

Figure 7.1. Distribution of landholdings in Geblen



Source: ERHS

Thirty-five per cent of households lack male labour. This high proportion is comprised of female-headed households whose male members were killed during the civil war or Eritrean conflict or have migrated in search of employment. Many of these households sharecrop out their land or hire labourers (respondent GM22, GT10). Meanwhile, 14 per cent of landholders with male labour do not have any oxen and must therefore either borrow oxen, hire them or sharecrop their land. The local sharecropping arrangement stipulates that the sharecropper supplies the inputs, while the grain produced is split equally between the landholder and the sharecropper, and the chaff, used as animal feed, is taken by the sharecropper.

Based on the ERHS, there is no difference between the ethnic groups regarding access to agricultural inputs. The Irob were reported by several respondents to be concentrated in the *kushet* of Semui Daga and Erata, which are located on the steep slopes that descend into the

valley, requiring terracing to access any agricultural land. Nevertheless, the ERHS provides no evidence that the Irob have any less land than the Tigrawi.

A few households pursue non-agricultural activities in order to make ends meet (see table 7.3). For women these include brewing, weaving baskets and making pottery, while some men do day labour, cutting stone and building houses. Among the wealthiest people are the few that have established successful off-farm businesses, including mills, shops and restaurants (respondents GM2, GF9, GM27), or those who receive remittances from relatives with jobs in Ethiopian cities or abroad. In the 2009 ERHS, four households received remittances, two from relatives in foreign countries, one from Mekele and one from another rural area. Overall, however, there are limited opportunities for livelihood diversification, a common risk management strategy of poor households (Dorward *et al.* 2006). Indeed, government and NGO public works programmes are reported as the main source of off-farm ‘employment’.

Table 7.3. Sources of off-farm income in Geblen

	Number of respondents
Public works	65
Handicrafts	2
Brewing local alcohols	2
Professional (teacher, govt officials etc)	1
Skilled labourer	1
Trader	1

Source: ERHS 2004

Social protection in practice

During the first five years of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) (2005-09), Geblen differed from government policy in its targeting strategy. The community decided that rather than selecting all members of the poorest households, a few members of every household should be included, a universal approach described by one *wereda* representative as a providing a ‘democratic right’ to support (respondent GW2).³⁸ Nonetheless, the extremely low rate of graduation during the first phase prompted the regional government to order local administrators to change in the second phase (2010-14), selecting only the most in-need households and providing support for all their members (respondent GW2). This selection has been conducted broadly in line with PSNP guidelines, which require the formation of a Food Security Task Force (FSTF) from members of the *tabiya* administration, including the DAs, and elected community

³⁸ Similar universal approaches have been reported in parts of Amhara (Guush Berhane *et al.* 2011).

representatives. This taskforce draws up a list of the most food insecure households, which is discussed and potentially revised at a community meeting.³⁹

As of 2010, according to the *wereda* PSNP desk, out of 630 households, 339 were involved in public works, while an additional 201 received direct support, from January to June each year. Many of those excluded from the PSNP received emergency assistance from the Catholic Mission, which ran a similar cash-for-work programme providing 80 days work for 284 people (respondent GN1). The Catholic programme's administrators report that participants were selected by the *tabiya* administration, focusing on the poorest not already in the PSNP (respondent GN1). All these public works were in addition to the 40 days of unpaid community service expected of each *tabiya* member.

The land policy and the guarantee of a livelihood

Despite the implicit assumption in ADLI that households with the 'ideal' set of agricultural inputs constitute the norm, in Geblen there are only a handful of such households and just one among my respondents. GM22 is an Orthodox priest who was a local administrator for 38 years under Haile Selassie, the *Derg* and the TPLF, stepping down in 2009. He has one hectare which is located next to a dam built by the Catholic Mission to provide drinking water and which he has been given special dispensation to use for irrigation. He has a generator and pump to irrigate the land, and hires a labourer for 150 *birr* per month to grow potatoes, barley and vegetables. He also receives remittances from a son who is a doctor in Mekele and a daughter working in Kuwait.

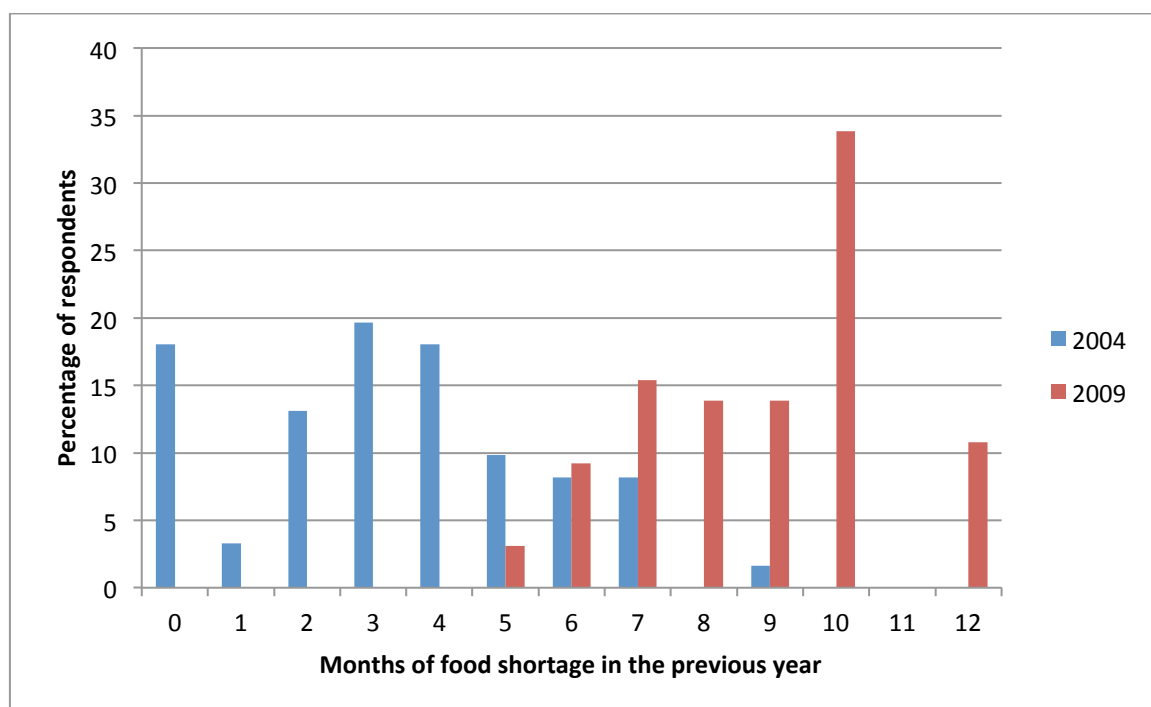
The shortage and poor quality of the land is such that this man was my only respondent who claimed to be able to produce sufficient food for their household for the entire year. In contrast, the vast majority of respondents reported annual production of between one and five months' food.⁴⁰ Similarly, all respondents to the 2009 ERHS, following a long period of drought, reported food shortages of at least five months, with many facing shortages throughout the year (see figure 7.2). While respondents to the 2004 ERHS reported that the rainfall was better in that year, more than 80 per cent nevertheless faced substantial food shortages, indicating that the problems cannot be solely attributed to adverse weather.

Like in Turufe Kechema, in Geblen the land policy does provide a form of protection by preventing distress sales of land. However, in Geblen agricultural production is so problematic that, with the exception of GM22 and a perhaps handful of similar households, the land policy guarantees a small part of a household's subsistence rather than a self-sufficient livelihood.

³⁹ Past studies have found that the PSNP's targeting mechanism is relatively accurate (Sharp *et al.* 2006), although there will be some inclusion and exclusion errors in any targeted policy. While targeting mechanisms are important considerations regarding individual outcomes, the main focus of this thesis is the role of the PSNP in the government's social policy strategy. For this purpose the fact that the policy is targeted is important, the precision of the targeting mechanism is less so.

⁴⁰ It is possible that some people may have underestimated their production in the expectation that I might be in a position to provide support, although I had assured respondents that this was not the case. However, the extent of food shortages was corroborated by local government officials who, as a result of the system of government performance assessments (see below), do not have any interest in exaggerating the problems.

Figure 7.2. Months of food shortage in Geblen



Source: ERHS

The differential impacts of the land policy by gender and age

Households lacking male labour sharecrop out their land or, in exceptional cases, hire male labourers. Although hiring a labourer is more beneficial to the landholder, there are few people with money to pay a labourer before harvest time. During my interviews, I came across only two women who were able to do so (respondents GM22, GT10). For the most part, therefore, landholders who lack male labour receive less than half the income of that earned by a male headed household which otherwise has the same inputs. Given the inadequacy of most landholdings, food shortages for these households are therefore even more severe.

One objective of land registration is to improve tenure security for women. In Geblen, the implementation of land registration involves a mixture of formal rules, defined in the land proclamation, and informal practices. Though not mentioned in the proclamation, land allocations are based on the concept of a *gebri*, notionally the amount of land that can be ploughed by a pair of oxen in one day. In Geblen, the size of a *gebri* varies considerably based on land quality. For example, the head of the LAC estimated that for land with shallow soil a *gebri* is about 0.5 hectares, while for land with thicker soil, a *gebri* might be as little as 0.06 hectares (respondent GT8).⁴¹ Individuals—both male and female—are allocated half a *gebri*, with the intention that a married couple together will have one *gebri*. Although the latest land

⁴¹ The variability of the *gebri* calls into question ERHS data on landholdings. The majority of my respondents were not aware of the size of their land in units such as hectares or *timad* (used in Geblen in the ERHS). In addition, land measurement in Geblen is conducted based on estimates by sight since the topography makes it extremely difficult to measure the land with a rope (GT8, GW1). Respondent's estimates, along with my own by-sight estimates, suggest that the ERHS data may be over-estimates.

proclamation stipulates that land certificates should be issued jointly to the husband and wife, land was registered before this proclamation. Therefore, in Tigray, land has been registered to men and there is little motivation to re-issue certificates.

Consequently in Geblen, when both husband and wife brought land to a marriage, all the household's land was registered to the man. However, if the woman had land while the husband was landless, the land was registered to the woman alone (respondents GM19, GM23). Although the land proclamation makes no reference to the division of land in the case of divorce, local people expect it to revert to its original holder. Land should be equally divided where both parties have half a *gebri* and, if the land belonged to the woman, the man has no claim (respondent GM19, GM23). In cases where the man has land and the woman has none, if the couple have children, the woman is entitled to half the land to support the children (respondents GF5, GF6, GM18, GM19, GT10), whom she is expected to look after. However, if they have no children, the woman has no claim (respondents GF4, GM19, GT10).

For example, GF6, who is in her thirties, had half a *gebri* before marrying. After she was married, the one *gebri* belonging to the couple was registered in her husband's name. Nevertheless, when they divorced recently, her half *gebri* was returned to her without dispute and she has now been issued with a certificate in her own name. The land is now sharecropped by her brother and they produce 2-3 quintals of barley which lasts them a maximum of three months. She relies on the PSNP to fill most of the gap.

Similarly, GM19 and GM23 were both working in Eritrea at the time of the last land redistribution and so were not allocated land, though their wives received a half *gebri* each. The men were forced to leave Eritrea during the war and returned to Geblen. Although the husbands plough the land, it is registered to their wives and they agree that they would have no right to the land if they divorced.

Given the informality of women's land rights, I had expected to find cases where women had lost land on divorce. However, I was unable to find any evidence of land disputes relating to divorce or complaints by divorced women. While the limited achievable productivity may limit demand for land, it would also appear that the idea that women have equal land rights is well established, even though it is often not reflected in the land certificates.

Food insecure households and prospects for graduation

The large gap between households' production and their subsistence requirements is met primarily by the PSNP and, to a lesser extent, the Catholic Mission's assistance. In Geblen the PSNP payment is split between three months' cash—50 *birr* per month per recipient—and three months' in-kind—50 kg of grain per month per recipient. Cash payments are infrequently adjusted for inflation (respondent GW2), which in the context of rapid increases in food prices, means that the payment falls behind food prices (see Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2010). Nevertheless, due to the problematic nature of agricultural production, the PSNP is by far the most important income source. In 2009, a drought year, the PSNP constituted 60 per cent of

households' income, on average. In contrast, crop production contributed just 14 per cent of household income, 27 per cent from livestock and minimal amounts from off-farm sources.⁴²

The universal approach to distributing the PSNP was therefore an understandable response to the fact that no household could objectively be described as wealthy and only a handful, at most, are food secure. Although those excluded during the second phase may be relatively better off, many are unable to produce sufficient food in a good year (respondents GT7, GM23) and, therefore, should be classified as 'chronically food insecure'. Each year, the FSTF estimates the number of households that require PSNP support and these numbers are aggregated at the *wereda* and regional levels. Nonetheless, targeting is ultimately constrained by top-down quotas according to the availability of resources at each level of administration, with the result that each *tabiya* often has to limit the number included (see Sharp *et al.* 2006).

Public works focus primarily on erosion prevention through the construction of terracing, drainage ditches and check dams. PSNP households provide five days labour per month for each household member. Consequently, some people contribute 20 to 30 days a month in public works to cover the quota for their dependents (respondents GM4, GF5, GF10, GM15, GM21). Yet, while the scale of the terracing and drainage systems constructed is undeniably impressive, these anti-erosion works limit further deterioration, rather than making a substantial contribution towards improved agricultural productivity.

Given the serious challenges to crop production, the *wereda* administration encourages farmers to focus on animal production through its extension packages (respondent GW1). These packages are not so dependent on the standard agricultural inputs of oxen, male labour and even land. Dedit provides most packages as cash loans with which farmers are expected to buy animals at the local market, thereby providing stimulus to the local economy (respondent GT5). Money can be borrowed from Dedit to buy chickens (12.50 *birr*), cows (900 *birr*), goats and sheep (500 *birr*). Other packages which are unavailable in local markets are provided in-kind by the DAs, including beehives (843 *birr*) and colonies (750 *birr*), 'exotic' breed cows (1,200 *birr*) and treadle pumps for distributing harvested rainwater. Loans must be repaid within four years and are subject to interest of 18 per cent.

Beehives have been by far the most widely-adopted extension package. However, they have been negatively affected by the drought. GM16, an Irob man in his forties, was mentioned by several respondents as the most successful beekeeper. With his wife, he has one *gebri* of non-irrigated land from which he produces three months' food in a good year. He has bought two beehives but has only produced honey once in three years. The first colony produced 30 kg of honey which he sold for 40 *birr* per kg. However, he has had no production for the last few years due to the drought and his bees are said to be the only ones in Geblen that have not left. Having had limited success with his first hive, he was reluctant to take the second but says that,

'[local government officials] intimidate me and tell me that I will be removed from the PSNP if I don't take the packages, so I had to take them. The government is

⁴² These figures are based on the conversion of agricultural products into money based on estimates of local prices from the ERHS. The figures are intended as a guide to the relative importance of different sources of income but are only estimates.

looking to make a business out of beehives, they know that they aren't productive'
(respondent GM16).

GM22, the one farmer with the 'ideal' set of inputs, has taken five beehives in total. He produced 70 kg of honey the first year when he had three hives, which he sold at 40 birr per kg. Since then, even though he has had no further production and all his bees have left because of the drought, he has taken two additional beehives because, as a *tabiya* administrator, he felt he should set an example and encourage others to adhere to government policy, rather than in any expectation that they would be productive. He now uses the hives as household furniture.

Similarly, GM27 is a former *tabiya* administrator in his fifties. He has one and a half *gebri* and produces a maximum of three months' food per year. He is excluded from the PSNP but is part of the Catholic programme. He has also taken four beehives because the *tabiya*, which also selects the participants in the Catholic programme, threatened to remove him if he did not. He has never produced any honey.

These examples show that, if production and output markets⁴³ were reliable, beekeepers would be able to pay off the cost of the hives and colonies, and make a profit within two years. Nevertheless, beekeeping, like other agriculture, is dependent on rainfall and, given the drought prone nature of Geblen, it has thus far been spectacularly unsuccessful with no honey production in the entire *tabiya* in the last two years.

Attempts to promote other forms of livestock have not been quite as disastrous, although there have been considerable problems. For example, GM21, who is in his fifties, has one and a half *gebri* from which he produces a maximum of three months' food. He works for 25 days a month to cover the public works for his wife and children. He borrowed 900 *birr* and bought a cow in the local market. However, as a result of the drought and the limited available grazing, the cow never produced milk and with the loan repayment looming, he sold the cow. He insists that he took the packages under pressure from the local government,

'We are forced to take them. If we don't take them we will be out of the PSNP. I refused but was told that I was out of the PSNP so I accepted and was brought back in' (respondent GM21).

GF10 is a single mother of three in her thirties and is currently pregnant. She previously worked in a restaurant in Eritrea but was forced to leave during the war. She has no land and was working 20 days a month in the PSNP public works until her pregnancy. In order to remain in the PSNP she was told to take an extension package and bought an exotic breed cow for 1,200 *birr*. Although these cows are supposed to produce large amounts of milk for sale, to do so they require good grazing which is limited at the best of times but especially during droughts. Her cow has never produced milk and the breed is poorly regarded locally with very low resale values,

'The area is drought affected. The government is convincing us to take the packages but I bought the cow and now it cannot be sold. This area does not have the potential

⁴³ If production was successful and vast numbers of people in the area did produce honey, it is unclear whether there is sufficient demand to maintain these prices.

for bees or goats. We don't want to take the packages because it brings debt and we cannot pay it back' (respondent GF10).

The livestock packages failed to make any significant positive contribution to the income earning ability of my respondents. Sheep and goats appear to be more suited than cattle to grazing on the rocky hillsides. However, during regular periods of drought all livestock are threatened by starvation due to shortage of grazing and are more vulnerable to disease. Despite the high take up rates based on coercion, with virtually every household in the *tabiya* having taken at least one and often several extension packages, they remain subject to many of the same limitations as crop production—land shortages and unreliable rainfall.

The experience of the extension packages serves to highlight the implausibility, for the vast majority of people in Geblen, of graduation through improved agricultural production. As of the beginning of 2010, no one in Geblen, nor the entire *wereda* (respondent GW2), had graduated. Despite acknowledgement by the *tabiya* administration that 'there is no possibility of graduation' through agriculture in Geblen (respondents GT1, GT4, GT5), during my fieldwork they were planning to stage the graduation of one person—GM22, the only one of my respondents with the ideal set of agricultural inputs and who was able to draw on remittances from his children. He was one of the few people who were never food insecure in the first place and his 'graduation' was due to the change from universal to targeted provision, rather than the extension packages.

The high take up rate of extension packages, despite their poor performance, can be attributed to the top-down nature of policymaking, the system of targets and quotas by which *tabiya* officials are assessed, and the complete dependence of local people on state organisations for their survival. Each year the *wereda* sets the *tabiya* administration various targets, among which are the number of extension packages distributed, repayment rates and the level of production achieved (respondent GT5, see also Segers *et al.* 2009). The performance assessments and promotion prospects for officials are determined by their ability to meet these targets (respondent GT5). In particular, the DAs, who are brought into the community from other areas, are no doubt keen to move to postings in more desirable locations, providing great incentive to meet these targets, whether or not they make sense in the local context.

For the first few years at least, the *tabiya* administration admits that inclusion in the PSNP, essential for survival for the vast majority, was conditional on taking extension packages (respondents GT1, GT4, GT5, GT11). Two respondents claimed that the number of PSNP participants from their household had actually been reduced due to their refusal to take a package (respondents GF2, GM21). Other respondents had reluctantly bought packages, despite concerns. Regarding current practice, respondents in the *wereda* and *tabiya* were divided, with some saying that the requirement has now been ended (respondents GT1, GT4, GT5), while others maintain that it continues (respondent GW4). Nevertheless, almost all my respondents believed that inclusion in the PSNP remained conditional upon taking extension packages, so any policy change has not been communicated to the local people. As a result, last year the *tabiya* met the *wereda's* target of distributing 200 beehives and, despite having scored zero per cent on its production assessment, the *wereda*, which itself is subject to a similar assessment by the regional government, has increased this year's quota to 250 beehives (respondent GT5).

The extent to which the inhabitants of Geblen rely on state sanction for every aspect of their livelihoods—land access, support from the PSNP and Catholic programme, agricultural inputs and credit—is such that there is no option but to accept government policy as presented to them by the *tabiya* administration. Indeed, the people in Geblen are so dependent that on at least two occasions the *tabiya* has been given a regional award for most closely adhering to government policy (respondents GW3, GM22), despite its terrible record in improving food security. As a former *tabiya* administrator, now promoted to the *wereda*, explained, the local people are very good at ‘accepting’ government policy (respondent GW3).

Despite the food security problems in Geblen, there are no plans for capital-intensive Complementary Community Investments (CCIs). This is a more accurate reflection of the *wereda*’s assessment of the chances of graduation than the futile attempts to promote animal farming and prevent further soil erosion. When pressed, *wereda* and *tabiya* officials are well aware that agriculture has little potential. In the words of one *wereda* official, ‘the government, everyone knows that this area does not have potential to meet the objectives. There are few areas with less potential than here for graduation’ (respondent GW3). Nonetheless, institutional incentives require them to distribute extension packages. CCIs, however, are a different matter since they ‘would demand money’ (respondent GW2) and have little chance of success.

Landless households and resettlement

For the landless, the paths laid out in the government’s social policy strategy involve sharecropping the land of those unable to farm, which along with the PSNP can provide a minimal level of subsistence, pursuing education in the hope of finding off-farm employment or joining the resettlement programme.

The expectation that the young landless can sharecrop land to earn a living, however, ignores the land shortage and the fact that poor families also frequently lack oxen to plough (Yohannes Habtu 1997). In addition, the reliance on sharecropping has important gender implications, since for landless women the only way to access an agricultural livelihood is through dependence on a man. The government has also allocated rocky hillsides, which are unsuitable for crop production, to groups of landless to use for beekeeping. These projects, however, are subject to the same challenges as other attempts at apiculture.

There is a school in Geblen which covers grades one to eight and, if their families are able to support them, students can continue to grade twelve in Adigrat or Edaga Hamus. Nonetheless, continuing in education is by no means a guarantee of employment since youth unemployment rates can be as high as 50 per cent in Ethiopian towns (Serneels 2007). GM6 provides a common illustration of the problems faced. He is in his early twenties, his parents have one *gebri* and are in the PSNP. He attended primary school in Geblen and then went to live with his brother in Adigrat while he continued his education. GM6 failed grade ten and, although his brother found work as a construction labourer in Adigrat earning ten *birr* a day, GM6 has been out of work for months.

In Tigray a resettlement programme existed until 2006, relocating people from heavily-populated highlands, including Geblen, to sparsely-populated western lowlands, in particular Humera. Each farmer was allocated two hectares in an area suitable for growing sesame, primarily for export. Farmers were given a two-year trial, without losing any land in their place of origin. After two

years, they had to choose—either permanently relocate or return to Geblen. However, between the resettlement programme and the expansion of large-scale agricultural investment (see chapter 9) the supply of ‘empty’ land in Tigray has been exhausted and, given the moratorium on inter-regional resettlement, the programme has ended.

Although Geblen took part in the resettlement programme, few people joined and even less were permanently resettled. For example, GM11 is an Irob in his fifties. He previously had one *gebri* with his wife on which they produced barley and corn for three months. He was informed about the resettlement programme at a *tabiya* meeting in 2003/04 and, having previously spent time in Humera working as a building labourer, he signed up, unlike the majority who were reluctant to move so far away. He was allocated two hectares, which he claims was previously ‘free’ forest land. Nevertheless, the local agro-pastoralists were unhappy at the new arrivals and relations between the two groups are poor. He grows sesame which he sells to local traders. After two years, GM11 had to decide whether to keep the land in Humera or the land in Geblen and he chose Humera. Nevertheless, he only goes to Humera during the rainy season, spending the rest of the year with his family in Geblen. Indeed, the *tabiya* only took away GM11’s half *gebri*, putting the other half in his wife’s name. Only the man therefore has been ‘resettled’ and the rest of his family remain in the PSNP.

Similarly, GM24 is in his forties and had no land previously, relying on day labour building houses, along with food-for-work. He was allocated two hectares in Humera where he resides from June to November, spending the rest of his time with his family who have stayed in Geblen because of the risk of malaria in Humera. Although he produces 14 quintals of sesame per hectare, which he sells for about 12,000 *birr*, he says this is insufficient to support his family once costs of inputs and transport are taken into account. Consequently, although he has been ‘resettled’, his family remains in the PSNP.

In addition, several of those included in the resettlement programme decided to return having failed to acclimatise to the heat or having contracted malaria (respondents GM13, GM24). Surprisingly, given the government’s emphasis on graduation there appears to be no pressure from the *tabiya* administration for the families of resettled farmers to join the men in Humera or for them to stop receiving the PSNP. Therefore, while this process may succeed in bringing lowland areas under cultivation, contributing to increased export crop production, ‘resettlement’ is something of a misnomer and it does little to address Geblen’s food insecurity problem.

Alternatives to government prescribed paths

For the vast majority, the land policy and FSP fall well short of their objectives in Geblen. This has led a number of people to pursue strategies that go beyond the paths to graduation outlined in government policy, either to make ends meet in the short-term or in the hope of making long-term changes in their fortunes.

A common approach has been to apply for extension packages that are provided in cash and to misuse the money. Indeed, one such example constitutes a rare success story. GM2 and GF9 are a landless married couple in their twenties. Several years ago they borrowed 3,000 *birr* under the pretence of buying two cows and ten goats. Instead, they used the money to set up a shop, a cafe and a mill. These businesses have been successful: they have repaid all the money and were

removed from the PSNP during re-targeting. Indeed, they claim that their success directly contributed to the creation of the 'off-farm packages', with *tabiya* and *wereda* administrators so impressed that they allowed others to borrow up to 7,000 *birr* for similar activities, based on approval of the plans.

More commonly, several respondents who farm their own land and receive the PSNP still find it necessary to take additional loans to make ends meet. For example, GM16 borrowed 1,500 *birr* to buy food, and GM21 borrowed money to buy food and to help his children who are studying. Finally, some respondents borrowed money just to repay their debts for previous failed livestock packages. The chances of being able to repay these additional loans seem slim.

A few landholders have made the decision to leave the area. For example, GM14 is in his early forties. He received half a *gebri* during the last land redistribution. Yet ten years ago, unable to feed himself, he moved to Adigrat and secured a loan of 17,000 *birr* from Dashen Bank, which he is still repaying, to start a convenience store and establish himself as a trader. Since that time he has sharecropped out his land to relatives. However, based on the latest Tigray land proclamation, which states that landholders will lose their land if they are absent for more than two years, the *tabiya* administration has contacted him, warning him that he risks losing his land if he does not return to farm it.

GM17 is also in his forties and has one and a quarter *gebri*. He was a TPLF soldier in the civil war and, when the conflict ended, he became a judge in Adigrat and is now a legal adviser. He has been absent for nearly twenty years during which time he has sharecropped out the land. However, recently the *tabiya* administration contacted him, warning him to return to farm the land himself or risk having it confiscated. He is disputing their claims, since he believes the land proclamation gives former soldiers the right to retain land when absent. His sister, on the other hand, who works in a pharmacy in Adigrat, has already had her land confiscated rather than return.

All of the absentee landholders whom I was able to contact had managed to pursue their education or had fought for the TPLF, leading to better opportunities than afforded by agricultural life in Geblen. Meanwhile, many people living in Adigrat have been able to defy the warnings by returning to Geblen for a month and then leaving once the attention of the LAC has moved on (respondent GT7). Nevertheless, the issue is being taken seriously by at least some people in the *tabiya* administration, and, according to one LAC member, the failure to redistribute the land of absentees was one reason why the LAC was dissolved in 2007 and a new one elected (respondent GT7).

Although those with really good opportunities elsewhere are unlikely to be restrained by the potential confiscation of land, at the margins it does present a barrier to those considering leaving. Those with access to the basic set of agricultural inputs and the PSNP can achieve a minimal, dependent form of security in Geblen, which, though deeply problematic, is preferable to leaving, given the shortage of opportunities elsewhere. Migration would mean loss of the PSNP and land, without which failure in their search for employment would leave them destitute. This logic is not lost on local administrators, who recognise the role of the PSNP in stemming the flow of urban migration. One *wereda* official was very clear that 'the sense of the PSNP is to make

people stay for a period of time', while the 'land proclamation is intended to keep people in their place to retain the fertility of the soil' (respondent GW3).

The confiscation of the land of absentees, meanwhile, was justified in egalitarian terms,

'If anyone prefers to get a better job elsewhere they have a right but they cannot have both opportunities ... Sharecroppers won't consider the land as their own. People who leave should not take two opportunities, they should leave one to those that have none' (respondent GW3).

However, the policy makes no sense from the perspective of addressing local food insecurity. Given the current population and future growth the government and its foreign donors will have to continue to provide food aid indefinitely to the people of Geblen unless there is rapid expansion of off-farm income earning activities. Meanwhile, many young people, who have no land of their own, are faced with a choice between insecure, unreliable and poorly paid day labour in towns, the possibility of inheriting their parents' land and the dependent security of agriculture, or illegal international migration. In particular, a surprisingly large number of young people in Geblen have migrated to Saudi Arabia and Yemen in search of work.

For example, GF1 is in her early forties. She was a member of the TPLF during the war and subsequently went to Eritrea for work but was deported during the conflict. With no land and no job prospects, she left her two children with an aunt and paid a broker to take her to Saudi Arabia. The first broker took the money and left her in Djibouti and she had to pay another who took her to Yemen, where she was arrested, imprisoned for three months and then sent home. Undeterred, she tried again and succeeded in entering Saudi Arabia and found work as a cleaner earning 1,200 Riyal⁴⁴ per month, enabling her to send money to her family. After a year she was arrested and imprisoned for six months, before being deported and having her money confiscated. She first tried to find work in Adigrat and Edaga Hamus but when she failed, she returned to Geblen. She has used the little money she had to buy a bed, a three-piece suite and a fridge, consumer items, which are unheard of in Geblen.

GM10, meanwhile, is in his twenties and has no land. He attended school up to grade six but dropped out because his parents could not support him. Faced with the prospect of looking for day labour, he decided to go to Saudi Arabia, paying a broker in Mekele 3,000 *birr*. The first time he stayed seven months before being arrested and deported, but went straight back. The second time he spent two years, first working in a garment factory, earning 1,000 Riyal per month, before selling cannabis and alcohol, a much more profitable activity but one which carries a risk of severe punishment if caught. He decided to leave when he became sick and, being an unregistered migrant, was unable to receive medical treatment.

Many young men and women borrowed money from their families or took credit for extension packages to pay the brokers 4,000 *birr* for women or 3,000 *birr* for men, who are thought able to tolerate worse conditions, to be smuggled into the Arabian Peninsula. Despite the risks of punishment for men selling drugs and alcohol, and reports of frequent rape and abuse of women

⁴⁴ In May 2011, there were approximately 6 Riyal to the pound and *four* *birr* to the Riyal. Her salary as a cleaner was therefore equivalent to that of a senior Ethiopian government employee.

working as domestic servants (Bhalla 1999, de Regt 2007, Human Rights Watch 2008a), the example of men and women who have returned to the area having bought cars and minibuses, and established businesses with the money they saved whilst away, demonstrates the potential rewards.

Ethnicity and social policy

There is no evidence of ethnic inequality in access to agricultural inputs and no reports of ethnic conflict in Geblen (Kiros Gebre Egziabher and Solomon Tegegne 1996). As such, government social policy is not differentiated with respect to ethnicity. This is despite the ethnic federal system, which might be expected to politicise divisions between the Tigrawi majority and Irob minority, leading to territorial disputes. Equally, the previous *risti* tenure, like the clan-based tenure in Turufe, was based on descent and could have been expected to result in a clear distinction between 'indigenous' inhabitants and 'newcomers'.

The lack of ethnic land disputes between Tigrawi and Irob, like the low frequency of all land disputes,⁴⁵ might be explained by the limited importance of agricultural production compared to the PSNP. Nevertheless, respondents did report occasional conflicts between the Irob and neighbouring Afar ethnic group (respondents GM5, GM18). In addition to economic factors, the lack of conflict may be the result of the dominant local conceptualisation of the divide between the Tigrawi and Irob, and its incompatibility with the conceptualisation of ethnicity inherent in ethnic federalism. Ethnic federalism is based on a primordial understanding of ethnicity whereby membership of an ethnic group can be identified by outsiders based on objective criteria, in particular language. Nevertheless, interviews with respondents from both ethnic groups revealed the problematic nature of using any purportedly objective criteria as the basis of group identification.

Although there are differences in the mother tongue used in different households, with more Saho speakers in the *kushet* of Semui Daga and Erata, located closest to the Irob *wereda*, most people can fluently speak both Saho and Tigrigna. In addition, for most respondents, the mother tongue of a person does not simply map on to an ethnic identity, as assumed by ethnic federalism. When asked about their ethnic identity, the initial reaction of many respondents was to reply that they 'speak Tigrigna or Saho' rather than identifying themselves as members of one ethnic group or the other. A substantial number of other respondents pointed out the problems inherent in distinguishing between the two groups, for example pointing out that since the Irob special *wereda* is within Tigray, all Irob are by definition Tigrawi as well,

'From Edaga Hamus to here it is Irob but generally it is Tigray. So Irob in Tigray. I prefer Irob first but second I am Tigrawi ... Irob and Tigrawi, their capital is Mekele. Irob are all Tigrawi' (respondent GM18).

'A Tigrawi is someone who is living in this area—both the Muslims and the Christians are Tigrawi. In this area all people are considered Tigrawi' (respondent GM12).

⁴⁵ *Tabiya* records documented only one dispute in recent years between two siblings concerning an inheritance.

Equally, some respondents whose parents were from different ethnic groups emphasised the impossibility of simplistic distinctions,

'I would say I am a Tigrawi Irob ... my mother is Tigrawi, my father is Irob. In terms of religion I am Tigrawi [Orthodox Christian, in contrast to the majority of the Irob in Geblen who are Muslim] but in cultural attachment I am closer to Irob. I could be both but I only learned Tigrigna recently' (respondent GM1).

Respondents also dismissed other features that might be used as markers of ethnic membership. A few respondents pointed out that most Irob in Geblen are Muslim in contrast to the Tigrawi who are predominately Orthodox Christian (respondents GM7, GM27). However, most respondents recognised that religious divisions cut across the ethnic groups. In addition, the Muslim Irob in Geblen are rather unusual since the vast majority of the Irob are actually Christian. In the past the Irob and Tigrawi differed in livelihood, with the Tigrawi predominately involved in settled crop cultivation, while the Irob were pastoralists. However, in Geblen, as elsewhere, the Irob have turned to settled cultivation. There is also no division between 'indigenous' inhabitants and newcomers, since no one is sure which group arrived in Geblen first. Rather, many respondents believe that the Irob and Tigrawi descend from common ancestry,

'This area is considered the place of six clans but now they have condensed into the Tigrawi and the Irob' (respondent GM1).

'The early comers were Gada and Ismail but people today are not just from these but from all six clans. Everyone comes from a mixture, everyone is part of the same' (respondent GM5).

By stressing their common ancestry, they emphasise that the use of different languages is of limited importance and not an indicator of a distinctive identity,

'Our origin is the same but they differ by language. A Tigrawi cannot speak Saho. The difference is language but they are the same' (respondent GM5).

Some respondents even indicated a degree of individual choice regarding ethnic membership, when asked about the ethnicity of children of mixed parentage,

'It depends on their interest. It could be Irob, it could be Tigrawi, you cannot tell' (respondent GM7).

Consequently, in most cases the distinction between the two ethnic groups is a fluid one that has little relevance to most people's daily lives. More important is the religious distinction between Muslims and Christians. Although relations between the two religious communities are amicable, followers of different religions cannot intermarry, unless one is willing to change their religion, and they cannot eat together as food must be blessed. Nevertheless, followers of the two religions often attend celebrations together, eating separately (respondent GM12).

According to my respondents, therefore, being Irob and Tigrawi are not mutually exclusive, rather they are fluid, sometimes intangible identities with no objective markers. Although some people still refer to themselves as either Irob or Tigrawi, this seems to be in recognition that it is as much

an individual choice, with self-identification as an Irob not mutually exclusive to being Tigrawi, as it is pre-determined by language or religion or anything else.

While, in many respects the local understanding of the division between Irob and Tigrawi reflects a constructivist conceptualisation of ethnicity, this is not an indication of their approach to ethnicity in general. In contrast, the difference between a Tigrawi, and an Amhara or Oromo was clear to respondents, and in line with the primordial assumptions of ethnic federalism.

'It is easy to make a distinction between Amhara and Tigrawi but not a Tigrawi and an Irob' (respondent GM7).

'We have a clear difference between Tigrawi and Amhara. How could a Christian and a Muslim that cannot eat the same meat be the same? The same is true for Oromo and Amhara. There are boundaries. The Christian Tigrawi and Irob are the same, they just speak different languages' (respondent GM1).

Conclusions

Aspects of the four social policy discourses are evident in policy implementation in Geblen. In particular, social policy implementation is strongly influenced by the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses. These discourses are used to justify restrictions on land transfers to protect smallholders from displacement and to achieve equality of outcomes, by redistributing the land of those who have left Geblen. In addition, the concern with targeting and dependence that constitute key aspects of the poverty reduction discourse is apparent in the implementation of the PSNP. Finally, the productivist discourse is clearly evident in the PSNP and other public works programmes which aim to improve community infrastructure to prevent erosion and raise agricultural productivity.

It is hard to imagine a location less suited for commercial agriculture than Geblen given its drought prone nature, lack of potential for irrigation, poor soil quality and shortage of land. Consequently, agricultural commercialisation processes have not had any effect on the implementation of the government's land policy. Similarly, the absence of ethnic disputes shows that ethnic federalism does not inevitably lead to ethnic politicisation in multi-ethnic communities. In part, this may be due to the low importance of land given the challenge of agricultural production. However, the analysis also showed that local conceptualisations of ethnicity do not fit the primordial assumptions of ethnic federalism.

Population growth and the resulting land shortage have, however, played an important role in policy implementation. According to property rights theory, population growth should lead to increased demand for land, changes in relative prices and, ultimately, privatisation. This is evidently not the case, however. The government has used the land shortage to justify an increased state role in land administration, limiting the choices available to smallholders in an attempt to reduce urban migration. As in Turufe Kechema, this has included attempts to find collective, rather than individual solutions to the problems, forming young landless adults into cooperatives to use land as a group. Nevertheless, the land shortage means that there are virtually no households that resemble the ideal economically autonomous household assumed to

be the norm by government discourse. This is not merely an example of poor implementation—considerable government resources and effort have been expended in Geblen in an attempt to raise productivity and achieve food security. The land shortage, however, remains a fundamental constraint that presents a serious challenge to the FSP and the objective of achieving food security and graduation.

In the absence of rural and urban off-farm employment, landholders attain a minimal form of security through access to land and the PSNP. This security is, however, achieved through dependence on organisations directly or indirectly related to the party-state, leaving no space for independent representation of farmers' interests. While the analysis highlights the links between the land policy and the PSNP, the government nevertheless remains unwilling to confront the failings of its approach to land and agriculture in general. Consequently government officials identify the behaviour of smallholders as reason for the failure to achieve food security, highlighting a 'dependency syndrome' and the ignorance of farmers as key constraints, and justifying intrusive and paternalistic state interventions to address the problems.

As highlighted in chapter four, the PSNP and state land ownership are justified based on very different and, indeed, contradictory discourses. In Geblen, the PSNP is incorporated into the government's state-managed development strategy. The result is that the PSNP and similar NGO cash transfer programmes form a key part of the system of production providing the main source of off-farm 'employment', filling the consumption gaps left by the unrealistic assumptions of the agricultural development strategy and enabling the government to retain control of migration in order to limit urban instability.

8

Agricultural investment and new forms of production

This chapter presents three shorter case studies examining agricultural projects established as part of the government's attempts to promote investment. The projects vary according to the type of investor—domestic and foreign, private and public investors; the type of crops grown—wage foods, bio-fuel feed crops for export and industrial crops; and the system of production established by the investors—using wage labourers and different types of outgrower schemes. The case studies focus on new forms of production and their impact on social policy, in particular land tenure, differentiated by class, gender and age. The cases question the contribution made by these investments to the objectives of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI), namely egalitarian agricultural growth that protects smallholder farmers.

The first case study examines the impact of several domestic private investors growing wage foods using labourers in Korodegaga. The second case focuses on a foreign private investor growing castor for bio-fuels using outgrowers and wage labour in Hawi Gudina. The third case analyses the expansion of an Ethiopian state-owned sugar plantation using outgrowers to produce sugar and ethanol for domestic and export markets. The final section concludes.

Korodegaga: Small investors on communal land

Korodegaga *kebele* is situated in Arssi zone, Oromiya at an altitude of 1,300-1,400m in the Rift Valley, 115km southeast of Addis Ababa. The *kebele* lies between the Awash and Kelata Rivers and comprises several villages. Fieldwork focused on Sefera, a village on the banks of the Awash. As a result of the relatively low altitude, the climate is dry and hot with one rainy season between June and August, although these rains frequently arrive late, stop early and occasionally fail altogether. Several respondents believed that climate change has resulted in a reduction and greater variability in rainfall. Korodegaga has been dependent on food aid for several decades and, as a chronically food insecure *kebele*, is included in the Productive Safety Net programme (PSNP). In years when rainfall is particularly poor, there is almost complete crop failure, such as in 2004/05 and 2009/10, when fieldwork was conducted.

There are three government development agents (DAs) in Korodegaga and, in the absence of a farmers' cooperative, these DAs also provide improved seeds for maize and *teff*, and fertiliser. Previously, these inputs were available on credit, but, since 2008, farmers have been required to pay the full cost when they receive them. Using irrigation and other improved inputs, farmers have been able to produce two crops a year and achieve considerable yield increases compared to local seed varieties.

Although Korodegaga is only 25km from the city of Adama, as the crow flies, the *kebele* lies on the other side of the Awash and is not connected by an all weather road. Farmers with small amounts of produce to sell can cross the river on a raft and walk 2km to the Sodere resort where public transport is available. For farmers operating on a larger scale, lorries must drive 15km on a dry-weather road, to the nearest paved road.

Almost the entire population of Korodegaga are Muslim Arssi Oromo, divided into 13 clans. Among the Arssi polygyny is common, with men having up to three wives. In addition to the Arssi Oromo, there are a few migrants who come to work as agricultural labourers including from other parts of Oromiya, Amhara and Wolayita.

The agricultural system of production

According to the 2009 Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS), 9 per cent of households had access to the ideal set of agricultural inputs for Korodegaga (table 8.1). Although there is a land shortage among young adults and growing numbers of landless, figure 8.1 shows that land is much less of a constraint than in Turufe or Geblen since the majority of landholders have more than one hectare. Instead, irrigation is the main source of differentiation, given the unreliability of rain-fed agriculture and the considerable potential of nearby rivers. The main crops grown on rain-fed land are maize and *teff*, while farmers with irrigated land grow maize or cash crops including chillies, tomatoes and onions. Cash crops are sold in local towns or transported to Addis Ababa. In the 2009 ERHS, 50 out of 106 households had some irrigated land, while just 21 households had the required 0.5 hectares to be classified in the 'ideal'.

Table 8.1. Access to agricultural inputs in Korodegaga

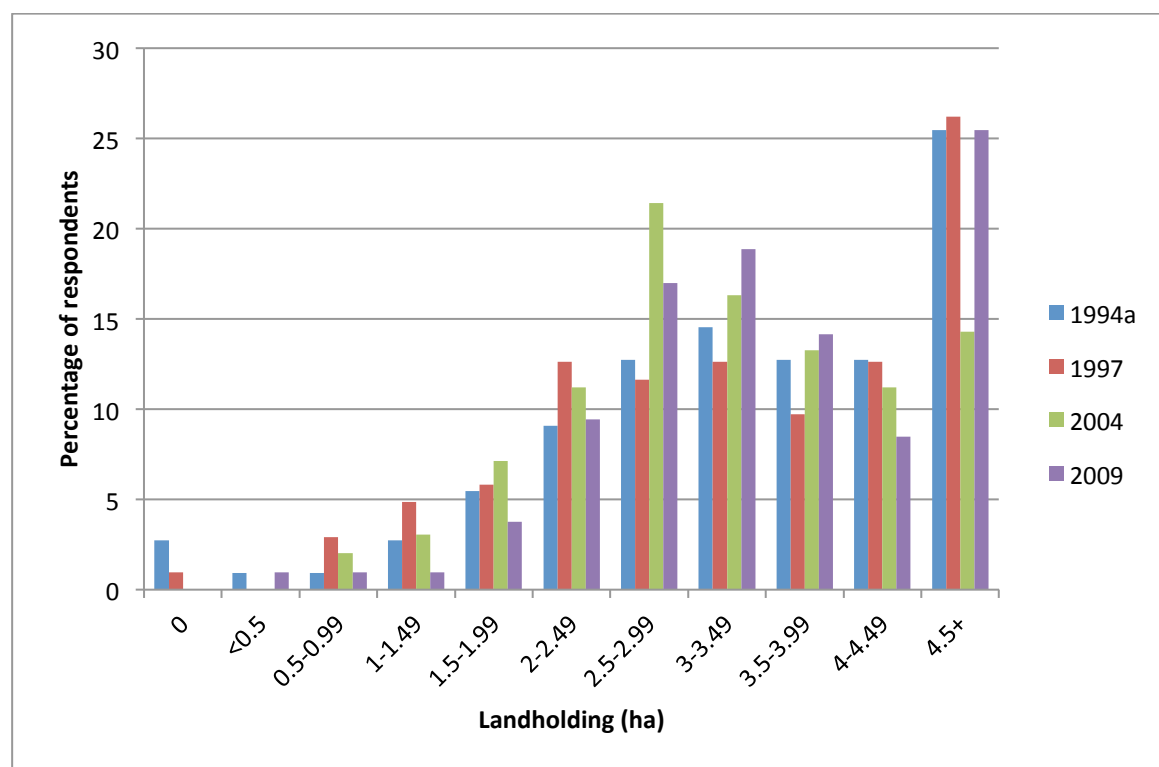
	Percentage of respondents
'Ideal' set of inputs (1ha land of which 0.5ha irrigated, labour, pair oxen)	9
Some land but no male labour	10
Land and labour but no ox	13
Basic set of inputs (some land, labour and one ox)	67

Source: ERHS 2009

As in Turufe Kechema, the customary practice requiring widowed women to marry a male relative of their deceased husband is probably one reason why there are few households without male labour. The expectation of government policy is that these households sharecrop out their land in order to earn an income. However, given the unreliability of rain-fed production, there is little demand for sharecropping or rental of non-irrigated land (respondents KF2, KF3, KF5, see

appendix B). Wealthy local farmers and some small-scale investors do rent irrigated land to produce cash crops and in 2009/10, it cost 1,500 *birr* to rent 0.25 hectares (respondent KM4).

Figure 8.1. Distribution of landholdings in Korodegaga



Source: ERHS

In an attempt to address the growing landlessness problem, the government has allocated communal grazing land to young landless people to farm collectively. However, this land is rain-fed and production is unreliable. The main 'employment' reported by respondents was the PSNP public works (table 8.2), which, among other things, has been used to maintain the road to the village and construct irrigation ditches. As in Geblen, in the context of extreme, chronic food insecurity the PSNP has become a central feature of the system of production. Many local people work as day labourers for agricultural investors to supplement their farm income and many women collect and sell firewood, contributing to rapid deforestation.

Table 8.2. Sources of off-farm income in Korodegaga

	Number of respondents
Public works	138
Paid farm work	39
Collecting and selling firewood / dungcakes	21
Traditional labour sharing	17
Handicrafts	2
Trade in grain	1
Other	1

Source: ERHS 2009

Combining agricultural commercialisation and social objectives

A number of irrigation projects have been established by local government, NGOs and local farmers to enable local people to utilise river water. These schemes have met with, at best, partial success, primarily due to the limited capacity of local people to deal with shocks such as motor failures and price fluctuations. The largest scheme covers 60 hectares and was originally established by UNICEF in 1986. The project used a pump to take water 100 yards from the Awash to the fields covered by the project, which were farmed collectively by the Farmers' Cooperative. This scheme operated for a few years until 1992 when the Awash flooded, damaging the motor. In the upheaval following the collapse of the *Derg*, neither local government nor the local people repaired the motor and production ceased (Assefa Tolera and Mesfin Tadesse 1996).

In the late 1990s, several relatively wealthy farmers clubbed together, selling animals to raise funds to buy a pump and motor to irrigate plots of communal land situated near the UNICEF project (respondent KK1). When their activities were reported to the *wereda*, the administration was initially unhappy that the farmers had illegally occupied communal land for private use, but was nevertheless interested in building on the farmers' successful model (respondent KK1). In 2001 the *wereda* worked with an NGO to establish an irrigation scheme on 30 hectares of communal land, replacing the scheme established by local farmers (respondents KK1, KM1). The NGO created a cooperative with a fund to pay for the running costs and maintenance of the three pumps, and the irrigated land was distributed in 0.5 hectare plots to those willing to pay 70 *birr* to join.

Subsequently, the local government restored the former UNICEF project. In 2006 PSNP participants dug irrigation ditches and constructed a building to house new motors, purchased by the *wereda* (Workneh Abebe *et al.* 2006). In line with the egalitarian principles of the regional land proclamation, which stipulates that land covered by government constructed irrigation can be redistributed, the land in the scheme was divided into 0.25 hectare plots and distributed to every landholding household in the *kebele*, with a few landless households also receiving land (respondents KK1, KK2). As a result, most people in Sefera gained access to between 0.25 and 0.75 hectares of irrigated land in one or both projects, in addition to a larger amount of rain-fed land.

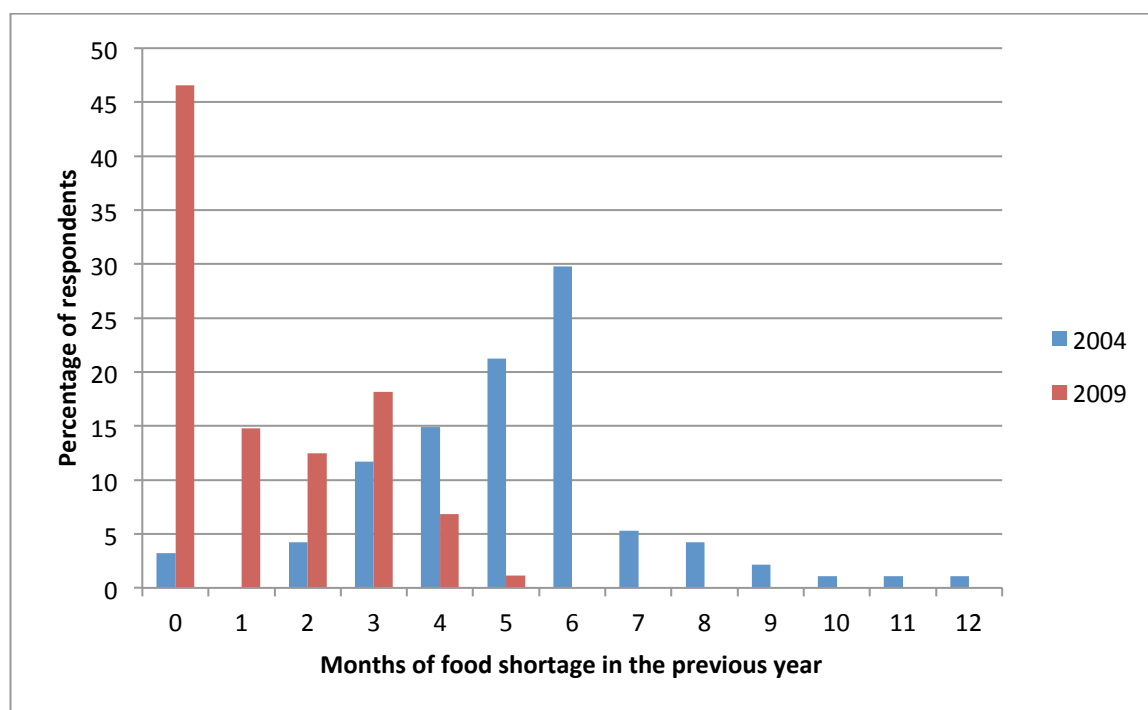
Both irrigation schemes have, however, suffered repeated breaks in production, often for several years at a time. Although the NGO scheme was operational during fieldwork, production has been repeatedly interrupted by motor failures and during fieldwork, one of the three motors was broken and awaiting repair (respondents KM6). Meanwhile, the government scheme produced just one crop in 2008 before the transformer was stolen, ending production. The breakdown of the government project is the reason why less than half the ERHS households reported having access to irrigation in 2009.

The main crops grown on irrigated land are maize and vegetables. Although farmers recognise that vegetables are more profitable, they also require investment of 6,000-7,000 *birr* for inputs such as seeds, fertiliser and pesticides, significantly more than for maize (respondents KK4, KM6). In addition, markets for produce are considered risky due to price variability (respondent KK1).

Given the farmers' lack of resources to invest in production and their preference for a reliable source of food for household consumption, most farmers plant maize on both irrigated and rain-fed land. In the 2009 ERHS, 71 per cent of irrigated land was used for maize, with less than 10 per cent used for vegetables and the remainder used for other cereals. Furthermore, just 12 per cent of plots were farmed with improved seeds and five per cent using chemical fertiliser.

Consequently, in years when rains are good, many farmers growing maize on irrigated and rain-fed land meet their subsistence requirements and produce a surplus for sale. However, when rains fail, production from irrigated land is barely sufficient for household consumption. In particularly bad years such as 2009, even with the PSNP and irrigated production, some people are forced to sell animals and other assets in order to survive (respondents KF5). Figure 8.2 presents ERHS data on food shortages, contrasting 2009, when rainfall was relatively good and nearly half of respondents faced no food shortages, with 2004 when the rains were worse, leading to reduced crop production on non-irrigated land and widespread food shortages. During my fieldwork the rains were reportedly worse than either year covered by the ERHS, leading to almost complete failure of rain-fed crops.

Figure 8.2. Months of food shortage in Korodegaga



Source: ERHS

One of the main problems with the irrigation schemes is that, when there are problems, both individual farmers and local government lack resources to repair infrastructure. While irrigation enables reliable production of some maize for household consumption, farmers struggle to produce a marketable surplus to invest in increased production or to pay for maintenance and repair costs. Indeed, the fund established by the NGO to pay for maintenance has been exhausted, in part because of rising fuel prices (respondents KK1, KM1, KF5). The members need to replenish the fund by paying 300 *birr* each after every harvest (respondent KK4). However,

given the failure of the rains, several cooperative members were concerned that they will be unable to contribute, placing future production at risk (respondents KM6, KF1, KF3, KF5).

Based on the challenges faced by these irrigation schemes, in the early 2000s the *wereda* land administration decided to lease adjacent communal grazing land to investors on 25 year leases in the expectation that they would have the resources to farm high value cash crops (respondent KW1). There are four investors in Korodegaga, three Ethiopian and one Australian. The largest has 30 hectares and the others approximately 10 hectares each. They all grow vegetables which are taken to market in Addis Ababa, although it is rumoured that the Australian intends to export his crop (respondent KI1). The community received no monetary compensation for the land since government officials consider communal land to be a government rather than a community resource. Instead, the investors promised to contribute to the community by building infrastructure such as a raft across the river, a mill and to bring electricity to the village. So far, however, only one investor has kept his promise, building a raft (respondent KK2).

The main impact on the local community has been to provide wage labour, in particular at harvest time. Production is labour-intensive and investors hire a number of regular workers throughout the farming season—for example, one domestic investor hires 25 people on his investment of 10 hectares (respondent KI1)—as well as a large number of labourers at harvest time. Although investors in Oromiya are required to hire all unskilled workers from the local community, investors complain that local people are lazy and demand high wages, so they have brought many workers from other areas (respondent KI1). Although several workers complained that the wages paid to labourers have not risen in line with food prices (respondents KF2, KF3), day labour on investment land has become an important source of income for many local people, supplementing their own production. There have been few direct negative impacts of the investments. Even though investors have occupied communal land, grazing land remains relatively plentiful and no respondents stated that the projects had damaged their ability to keep livestock.

Investors have not been immune to the production shocks that have faced the irrigation schemes. For example, one investor had his land confiscated by the government because his production was not successful. Another investor lost his original 80,000 *birr* investment when his land was flooded, destroying his crop. Nevertheless, he borrowed more money from friends to re-invest and made 400,000 *birr* from his five hectares the next year. He has subsequently leased an additional five hectares and, based on prices in late 2009, hoped to earn one million *birr* at harvest (respondent KI1). This shows that, despite the difficulties of transportation, with investment in inputs, there is considerable potential in agriculture in Korodegaga and, consequently, demand for irrigable land. It seems reasonable therefore to conclude that the land policy, which restricts land transfers, does prevent the displacement of smallholders and concentration of landholdings under capitalist production.

Summary

Several of the government's discourses on social policy are evident in social policy implementation in Korodegaga. The distribution of irrigated land draws on the egalitarian principles of the class homogeneity discourse, entitling all landholders in the *kebele* to a small

plot of land. Despite the promotion of agricultural investment, the peasant security discourse also remains influential on local government, preventing smallholder displacement and restricting investors to communal land.

While irrigation systems have reduced farmers' vulnerability to erratic rainfall, the analysis suggests that the government's egalitarian objectives have undermined the goal of maximising productivity. Were the government to distribute larger plots of irrigated land to fewer households, those farmers would likely be able to produce a regular surplus of cash crops for sale, generating an income which would enable them to re-invest in production and maintenance. In contrast, the government allocated tiny, sub-economic plots of irrigated land to most of the community, and farmers struggle to produce a subsistence, leaving no source of income to invest in future production.

The experience with these existing schemes appears to have convinced the *wereda* that investors implementing 'modern' agriculture offer better prospects of increasing productivity. In direct contrast to the class homogeneity discourse, the promotion of investment has resulted in a process of state-mediated differentiation. This has produced a class of mostly domestic small-scale capitalist farmers and the semi-proletarianisation of smallholders, whose households are unable to reproduce from year to year based on their own holdings and have become reliant on wage labour and the PSNP for survival. Although the promotion of investment challenges ADLI's claims that smallholder agriculture is inherently more productive, the government continues to protect smallholders from displacement by ensuring the legal separation of the two sectors, with investors unable to rent land directly from smallholders.

Ironically, Korodegaga is probably the only case study examined by this thesis where ADLI has considerable potential. Unlike the other case studies, if use of improved inputs, including irrigation was widespread, there is sufficient land to meet the household consumption requirements of the local population and produce a marketable surplus. However, for this to happen, the government would need to invest heavily in irrigation infrastructure on a large scale, covering the entire community, rather than limited areas next to the river, as at present. Indeed, Korodegaga would appear to be a good candidate for the Complementary Community Investment (CCI) programme. Major investment in irrigation infrastructure could provide every farmer with economically viable plots of irrigated land, contributing to increased productivity and addressing existing food insecurity. Thus far, however, government and NGO investment has been on a relatively small scale, and irrigation has been divided into sub-economic units, constraining productivity increases.

Hawi Gudina: A foreign private investor producing castor

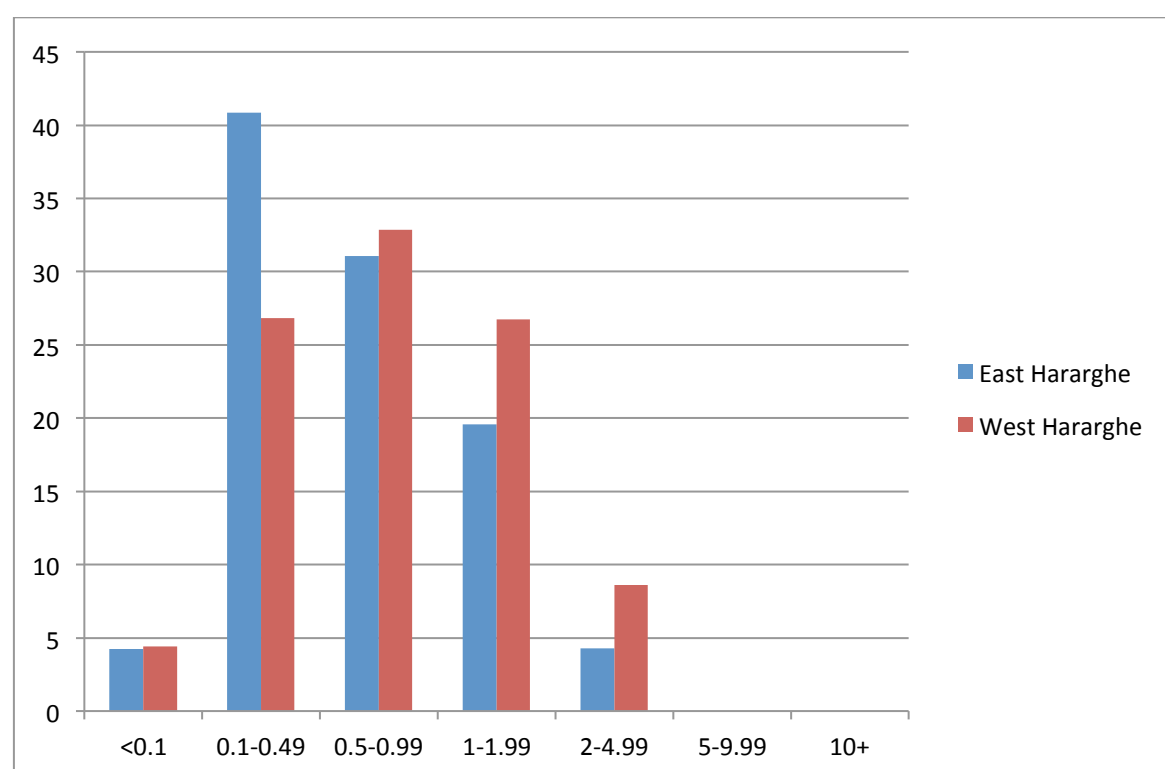
This case study examines what is to date one of Ethiopia's largest agricultural investments. At its peak, the project covered 72,000 hectares farmed using outgrowers in East and West Hararghe, and a further 60,000 hectares in West Hararghe, which was leased from the government. The project was established by Israeli managers in 2006 with finance from European investors and produced castor for bio-diesel, cosmetics and paints (respondents HI1, HI4). Demand for castor

has risen in recent years due to high fuel prices, EU requirements for bio-fuel use and increased demand from rapidly growing economies like China.

The prior agricultural system of production

Unfortunately, since none of the *kebele* covered by the project is part of the ERHS there are no data comparable to those presented for Geblen, Korodegaga and Turufe Kechema. The area covered by the project ranged in altitude from approximately 1,400 to 2,500m. Much of this area is among the most densely-populated parts of the country, with average landholdings less than one hectare per household. The land shortage is demonstrated by figure 8.3 which shows that in the whole of East Hararghe zone 76 per cent of landholders have less than one hectare, compared to 64 per cent in West Hararghe, where there are more lowland, less densely-populated areas.

Figure 8.3. Distribution of landholdings in East and West Hararghe



Source: CSA (2009b)

The main crops are sorghum, maize, potatoes and some cash crops such as coffee and *chat* (respondents HZ1, HM1, HM2, HF1, HF2). In addition, much of the land covered by the project is of questionable economic potential given the lack of rainfall, limited potential for irrigation and, though some of the outgrowers are located close to the main road between Addis Ababa and Harar, much of the land lies more than a hundred kilometres from the nearest paved road. As a result of these factors, many of the *kebele* were classified as chronically food insecure and received support from the PSNP and other NGO food security programmes (respondents HF1, HF2). A resettlement programme has relocated households from highland Hararghe to Wellega and Illubabor, as well as lowland parts of Hararghe.

The subsequent agricultural system of production

In 2007 the company leased 8,000 hectares in three *wereda* in East Hararghe. This land was identified by the investors using satellite images and was classified by the government as ‘unused’ (respondent HZ1). Nonetheless, when they arrived at the site, the investors found considerable areas were already cultivated by smallholders, while much of the remaining land was used by pastoralists (respondent HI1). Government officials expected the investors to negotiate with local people in smallholder areas, but told the investors that since the pastoralists were not ‘settled’, the land belonged to the government and the pastoralists could take their animals to graze ‘elsewhere’ (respondent HI1). Depending on the previous land use, different production systems were implemented. On pastoral lands and forests the investors farmed the land directly with wage labourers and machinery, while on cultivated land outgrower schemes were negotiated with elders (*Aba Gandaa*) acting on behalf of the local people (respondent HI3).

On the basis of this initial lease, and a commitment from the Oromiya government for up to 200,000 hectares, based on performance, the managers went to look for finance (respondent HI1). At that time, before the financial crisis and with considerable interest in renewable energy sources, they found finance from European investment funds easy to obtain, raising €17m, way beyond the €5m for which they were originally hoping (respondent HI2). Encouraged by this investment and optimistic about the potential of outgrower schemes, the investors planned a vast expansion. They convinced the government to support their plans because both the type of investment and the production system fit with ADLI. The investment is an agricultural project that produces industrial inputs for local processing and the resulting bio-fuel can either be exported or can substitute for imports. Furthermore, the head of the Oromiya regional government was particularly enthusiastic about outgrower schemes as a means of raising agricultural productivity while avoiding smallholder displacement (respondent HI2). The project, established in a food insecure area, also offered the potential for ‘graduation’ of PSNP recipients from government assistance (respondent HZ2).

Based on support for the project by high-level government officials, the zone, *wereda* and *kebele* administrations played a vital role in helping the investors to expand the project (respondent HZ1). Community meetings were held in each *kebele*, while the investors paid *kebele* leaders, *Aba Gandaa* and DAs incentives to convince people to join the project (respondent HI3, HF1, HF2, HF3, HF4). Indeed, *kebele* administrations signed contracts with the investors on behalf of the farmers. According to these contracts, the chairman and deputy chairman should have been granted power of attorney by the *kebele* members, though one respondent denied that this had happened (respondent HM3). This expansion process was so effective that by 2008, the project covered 72,000 hectares under an estimated 84,000 (respondent HI1) to 124,000 (respondent HI3) smallholder households in 240 *kebele* in East and West Hararghe.

The *kebele* signed three year contracts with the investors at a fixed price of 50 *birr* per quintal for the castor seeds produced. This price was intended to constitute a substantial increase in smallholder incomes based on estimated price and yield for sorghum under smallholder production, and the seed supplier’s estimates of castor yield (respondents HZ1, HI3). Outgrowers were required to switch up to half their land from cereals to castor, retaining some land for food production, and were supplied with seeds and fertiliser, the cost of which was deducted from

their payment when seeds were sold to the company (respondent HI3). Although the company advised the farmers, the smallholders managed production themselves.

In anticipation of the coming harvest, the company also built a bio-diesel processing factory with a 30 million *birr* loan from Nib, an Ethiopian bank, and hired 5,000 staff, including agronomists, accountants and supervisors to oversee production (respondent HI3). A large amount of money was spent on equipment—pesticide sprayers, peeling machines, motorbikes and cars—and the company leased an additional 60,000 hectares of ‘unused’ land in West Hararghe for 49 years, to be farmed as a plantation, though the outgrower scheme was initially prioritised (respondents HI3).

The project quickly ran into problems. Castor yields were massively overestimated as the seeds had not been tested across the full range of climate and soil conditions covered by the expansion (respondent HI3). In addition, by the time the company bought the seeds, sorghum prices in local markets had tripled and, given the fixed castor price, farmers were unhappy with their payment (respondents HI3, HM3, HF1, HF2). This news spread to neighbouring *kebele* and productivity deteriorated further as farmers neglected castor to focus on other crops (respondents HI3, HM4, HM5). The investor’s business model was based on yields of 70 quintals per hectare, a reduction on the 120 quintals per hectare estimate of the seed supplier to allow for a degree of risk. Nevertheless, average yield was just 3-4 quintals per hectare and the factory took only three days to process all the seeds bought (respondent HI3). Facing failure, the managers fled the country in April 2009 and, according to the new manager, stole the remaining money (respondent HI2). They left massive debts and no money to pay wages or buy the remaining seeds from the outgrowers (respondents HI3, HI2, HM3, HM6, HF1, HF2).

The failure of the project created a major problem for government, which was heavily involved in its establishment. The farmers lost up to half their annual crop production, and the pesticides used on the castor plants killed their bees, which had provided important supplementary income (respondents HM1, HM2, HM3, HI2). Consequently, some had to sell cattle to buy food and others increased reliance on the PSNP (respondents HF1, HF2).

The investment company, now under new management, is in the process of restarting castor production. They have abandoned outgrower schemes and plan to use mechanised farming on the 60,000 hectares in lowland West Hararghe, which has never been cleared, with the possibility of another 100,000 hectares in Arssi and Bale promised by the regional government (respondent HI2). In September 2010, the head of the project was optimistic that he would shortly obtain the US\$500 per hectare required to flatten, clear and sow an initial area of 10,000 hectares (respondent HI2). Meanwhile, land adjacent to the leased land has been the destination for a resettlement programme from highland to lowland Hararghe. The investors hope that these people will provide the labourers required for the production (respondent HI3).

All this leased land is classified as ‘unused’ since it is not cultivated. However, it was clearly being used by pastoralists to graze camels and cattle when I visited in September 2010. The only concession to the pastoralists is that the farm is not allowed to extend as far as the river, as the water is used by pastoralists in the dry season (respondent HI3). An interview with a senior official at the East Hararghe zone investment agency, responsible for the identification of land

suitable for investment, regarding this land illustrated the disregard with which pastoralists are viewed,

Interviewer: What is the land used for now?

Respondent HZ1: *'it is empty, it is pastoral [pause] it seems empty when you drive through a cross-section.'*

Interviewer: So what will happen to the pastoralists?

Respondent HZ1: *'well, in that way they use it, yes'*

Interviewer: So what will they do, will they have to move to other areas?

Respondent HZ1: *'that is no problem at all because we shall make our pastoralists settle. The pastoralist office works to make our pastoralists settle.'*

The project manager for the investment company was equally dismissive of the impacts on the pastoralists, as 'always they go away, they are only here temporarily' and when they return the next season 'it will be planted then with our crop so they will have to go to another place' (respondent HI3).

Summary

Despite the desire to promote large-scale agricultural investment, the peasant security discourse continues to be influential in government policy implementation in the case study, protecting smallholders from displacement. Indeed, for the government, in line with its productivist discourse, the investor's capital offered the potential to combine the land and labour of smallholder agriculture with improved technology, leading to a step change in farmers' incomes and enabling them to graduate from government support. The government played a key organisational role in the new system of production, whereby capitalist production relied on the state to incorporate and manage notionally independent smallholders.

In contrast to the settled smallholders, who are protected from displacement by state land ownership, pastoralists who currently use the leased land for grazing have, up until now, existed largely beyond state control, managing land communally. In effect, investment processes serve to demarcate the limits of the peasant security discourse, dismissing the validity of land 'use' for grazing by pastoralists and thereby excluding pastoralists from the dependent protection which is extended to smallholders. In leasing this land to investors, the state is expanding its reach into peripheral areas but on very different terms to that in the highlands, leading to the differentiation of large-scale capitalist producers and wage labourers.

The project is exceptional both in its size and the extent of its failure. Nonetheless, the case does have important findings of general relevance. First, it demonstrates that investment is a government-owned process. Key aspects of the project resonated with the government's development strategy, convincing officials to take huge risks with smallholder welfare. Although the government's promotion of investment is based on the premise that investors can be managed and directed to specific activities, this case raises important questions regarding the government's capability to do so. In particular, lower level government officials believed that as the investors were wealthy foreigners who had convinced senior government officials of the

project's benefits, there was little chance that the venture would fail and no need to regulate their activities. In the words of a respondent at the East Hararghe investment agency,

'Nobody dreamed that it would be such a failure. We knew how they worked, how they communicated with high officials. There were more than 40 foreigners here ... we didn't plan a risk avoidance strategy, no one dreamed the failure' (respondent HZ1).

Second, the government has only limited information on land use in remote areas that are the target of investment. In particular, the classification of land use disregards pastoralists who are seen as merely passing through land, rather than 'using' it and therefore can easily move on to other 'unused' areas. Finally, while the government makes efforts to prevent smallholder displacement, the outgrower schemes entail risks, which need to be taken into consideration. In this case, food insecure and extremely vulnerable smallholders became exposed to the risks associated with fluctuations in international and national prices for food and fuel.

Waqqee Xiyoo: State-owned sugar production using outgrowers

Recent years have seen demand for increased sugar production in Ethiopia resulting from rising urban demand, a desire to increase bio-ethanol production to reduce oil imports and a preferential EU trade agreement for sugar imports from developing countries. These factors came to a head in 2009/10, resulting in a severe domestic sugar shortage and, despite official government controlled prices, prices on the black market rose substantially. In response, the government banned sugar exports, resulting in a further deterioration in Ethiopia's foreign exchange earning capacity. The state Ethiopian Sugar Development Agency (ESDA), manages domestic sugar supply and four sugar factories. All the factories, including Wonji-Shoa, the subject of this case study, are being expanded to increase production of sugar and bio-ethanol (ESDA 2010).

Ironically, the Wonji-Shoa sugar estate was itself created as part of a previous 'land grab', when a Dutch company established the plantation by leasing 5,000 hectares on the Upper Awash from the Imperial Government in 1951, displacing the Jille Oromo pastoralists who had previously used the land for grazing (Bahru Zewde 2008). The plantation was subsequently nationalised, along with other capitalist agriculture under the *Derg*. Prior to the expansion, Wonji-Shoa had a plantation of 5,900 hectares employing wage labourers as well as approximately 1,000 hectares farmed by outgrowers (respondents WI1, WI2). The first phase of the expansion involves a 600 hectare plantation in Waqqee Xiyoo, East Shewa, and 2,600 hectares and a new factory, to be built by an Indian company, to produce raw sugar and ethanol in Awash Bisholla, Arssi. The second phase will involve another 6,000 hectares nearby in East Shewa, the land for which was being surveyed during fieldwork. There are also plans for a third phase nearby (respondent WI2).

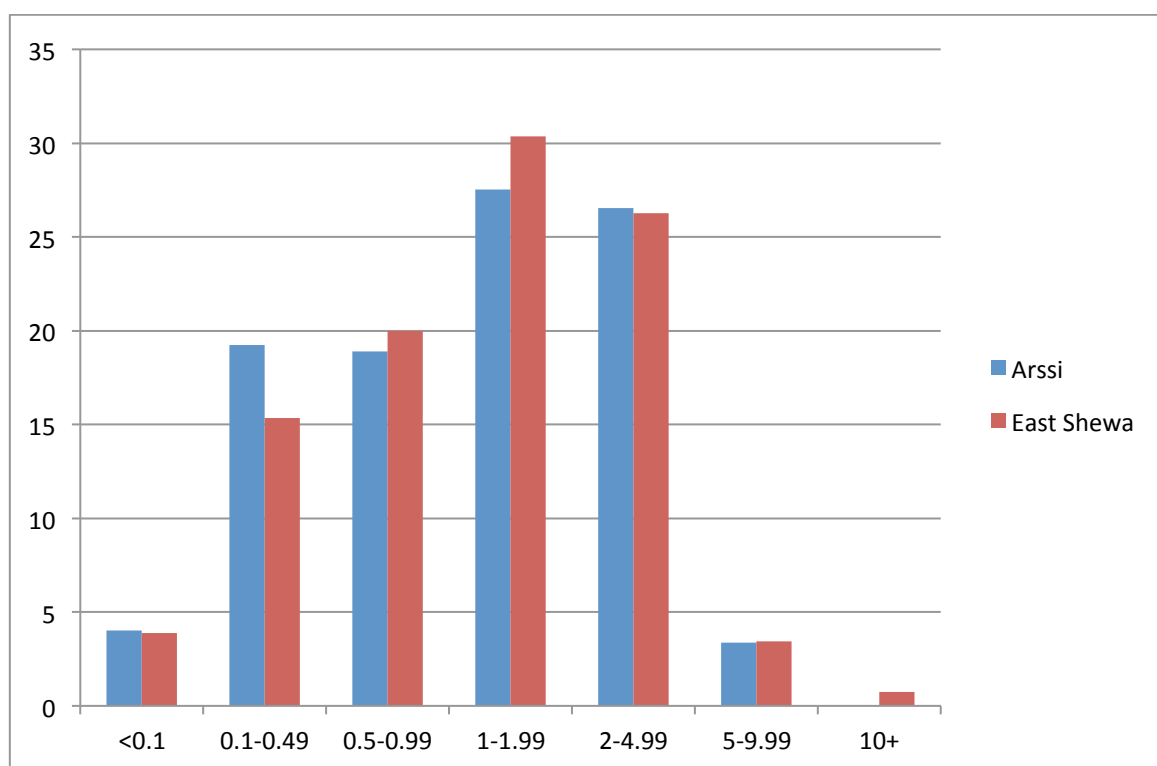
The prior agricultural system of production

The site is located on the Awash River a short distance upstream from Korodegaga at an altitude of 1,500-1,600m, and has a broadly similar terrain and climate. According to respondents, the

main crops grown before the plantation were maize, *teff* and split peas for household consumption. Although, like Korodegaga, there is one rainy season per year between June and August, according to respondents, the rains were more reliable. As in Korodegaga, irrigation was an important source of differentiation and the land shortage is not as acute as in many other parts of the country, with several respondents reporting landholdings in excess of three hectares. Figure 8.4 presents the distribution of landholdings in the relevant zones based on CSA data, showing that 39 per cent of landholders have less than one hectare in East Shewa, compared to 42 per cent in Arssi.

On the Arssi side of the river wealthy farmers had invested in pumps to irrigate their land and grow tomatoes, onions and chillies. On the Shewa side, a few farmers have been able to use spate irrigation to grow vegetables. Nevertheless, the vast majority of farmers had no access to irrigation and depended upon inconsistent rainfall for cereal and pulse production for self-consumption. The site in East Shewa was not classified as chronically food insecure, whereas the area in Arssi is food insecure and receives the PSNP. In addition to the irrigation potential, the two sites enjoy excellent market access since they are located on the paved road from Adama to Asella, about 100km from Addis Ababa.

Figure 8.4. Distribution of landholdings in East Shewa and Arssi zones



Source: CSA (2009b)

The subsequent agricultural system of production

The proposed expansion generated debate between government agencies regarding the system of production to be implemented. Statements in 2006 by the ESDA suggest that a private plantation may have been considered (Ethical Sugar 2006), though a senior ESDA representative knew of no interest from investors (respondent FG5). Meanwhile the management of Wonji-

Shoa, owned by the federal government through the ESDA, wanted to displace the smallholders and manage the plantation directly (respondents WI1, WI2, WI3, WW2, WW4). From an economic perspective, a directly managed plantation would perhaps be preferable since it would provide a reliable supply of sugarcane to justify investment in a new sugar factory in Awash Bisholla. Finally, the Oromiya regional government, which is responsible for land administration, has been keen to avoid the displacement of smallholders. The final agreement between federal and regional governments attempted to combine state investment, the commercial requirements of the sugar factory and the political imperative of avoiding displacement (respondents WW2, WW4).

The project is an example of a 'dividend scheme', an outgrower scheme in which the land is managed as a block by the investor, while the landholders work as labourers but play no role in managing production (Li 2011). The government formed the smallholders into three cooperatives and over a four-year period without production⁴⁶ Wonji-Shoa paid cooperative members a monthly allowance of 229 *birr* per hectare. Wonji-Shoa provides technical assistance to oversee production, while 'skilled' jobs such as harvesting the sugarcane are carried out by Kembata workers brought in by the sugar factory. On the other hand, 'unskilled' work—such as weeding, watering and guarding the crop—is conducted by wage labourers from the local community, with cooperative members given priority in job allocation. The cooperatives are required to repay the production costs—for seeds and fertiliser, the costs of operating machinery and the wages of skilled and unskilled workers—and are potentially liable for the substantial cost of constructing the sprinkler irrigation system, though a final decision has not yet been made by the government (respondents WI3). In addition, 490 farmers whose houses were on the site now occupied by the plantation were relocated and the sugar factory built new houses for them. These relocated farmers are also responsible for repaying part of the costs of the construction of their houses (respondents WI1, WW2).

During fieldwork in March 2010, the first crop from the 600 hectares in Waqqee Xiyoo had just been harvested, while Wonji-Shoa was still constructing the irrigation system for the plantation in Awash Bisholla. The initial results have been negative. The maintenance payments, set in 2006, but not adjusted for inflation, quickly became insufficient given rapid food price increases (respondents WM3, WM5, WF1, WF4, WF5). Meanwhile, the *wereda* farmers' union, elected by the cooperatives to negotiate the sugarcane price with Wonji-Shoa at three year intervals, had been pressurised by the *wereda* administration and cooperatives office into accepting a low price for the sugar produced (respondents WM4, WK5). As a result, the first sugarcane harvest sold at the agreed price did not cover production costs and the cooperatives were paid nothing (respondents WI1, WM5, WM6).

In contrast, as a result of high food prices, the few wealthy farmers with irrigation whose land was excluded from the sugar plantation have earned 50-60,000 *birr* per hectare growing vegetables (respondents WM5, WM6, WK5). Despite the understandable discontentment of the cooperative members, they are unable to extricate themselves from the scheme because the cooperatives are tied to an indefinite agreement to supply sugar exclusively to Wonji-Shoa (respondents WI3). Furthermore, the land that cooperative members still believe belongs to them

⁴⁶ The land was left fallow for two years and the first crop took two years before it was ready for harvest.

is actually in the process of being registered by the *wereda* to the cooperatives, not individual farmers (respondent WW4). Consequently, the only exit option the farmers have would be to leave the cooperative, losing 'their' land without compensation (respondents WM4, WM6). As a result, some farmers even question whether it would be a better deal for farmers were the sugar factory to displace them with compensation for their land rather than continue under the current arrangement,

'we are bonded labourers, like a man who is jailed. It is not comparable to the Derg, it is beyond the Derg. The Derg was better. It is a life imprisonment' (respondents WM4).

The sugar factory and government officials claim that the cooperative members made a free choice to join the project (respondents W11, WW2, WW4), whereas several cooperative members say they opposed the arrangement and were forced to join by the government (respondents WM7, WM8). Whatever the case, it is clear that the farmers did not have sufficient information to make an informed decision. Even by the first harvest, the cooperatives were unsure of the debt to be repaid, with ongoing uncertainty regarding the irrigation system, and had no oversight regarding the running costs paid to Wonji-Shoa and therefore what constitutes a fair price for the sugarcane. In theory the interests of farmers are represented by the cooperative. However, the cooperatives are closely regulated by the *wereda* cooperatives office (respondent WW1), and are widely seen as state organisations and a means of disciplining outgrowers (respondents WK3, WM7, WM8). Although the *kebele* chairman is responsible for implementing government policy in Waqqee Xiyyoo, he is also from the local community and a member of one of the cooperatives. Consequently he, like other farmers, is unhappy with the arrangement,

'The cooperative has no economic role but is for convenience and for supervision. Without the cooperative it is difficult to bring all the people together ... The coops are working under the kebele supervision' (respondent WK3).

The impact of the plantation is differentiated along class, generational and gender lines. Only landholders are members of the cooperatives and receive priority access to day labour (respondents WW2, WW4). Nonetheless, all the work done by local people is unskilled and relatively poorly paid, with 'skilled' workers brought in to operate machinery (respondents WW2, WW4). There are no training schemes to replace skilled workers with local staff. This class differentiation, stemming from land rights, reinforces existing generational and gender divisions. As in most of Ethiopia, land shortages mean that the majority of older men have land, and consequently became cooperative members, while young people are landless and seek wage labour. Although land registration in Ethiopia has received some praise by gender assessments for issuing certificates to both husband and wife (Askale Teklu 2005), the formation of the cooperatives pre-dated registration and consequently only the landholder—usually a man—was allowed to join. There are no attempts to rectify this situation with the result that the few female members are widows of former male members (respondents WM4, WM5). Women also tend to be allocated low status and poorly paid jobs, especially weeding, because they are not thought able to do jobs which involve lifting (respondents WF1, WM9, WM11) and would not be respected as team leaders, giving instructions to men (respondent WM11).

Summary

In Waqqee Xiyyoo, pressure for agricultural commercialisation, along with the requirement to avoid smallholder displacement, has led the government to make cooperatives a central feature of the system of production. While in certain respects this resembles a move towards a communal approach to land tenure, rather than devolving responsibility for land administration from the state to an independent body, the government exerts considerable influence over the cooperatives. The dividend scheme devised by the state agencies meanwhile is a more effective means by which the investor can control crop production than the outgrower scheme in Hawi Gudina. In effect, the cooperatives and dividend scheme are means of disciplining workers and extracting an agricultural surplus to promote industrialisation, rather than any serious attempt to give farmers greater control over agricultural production.

As in Hawi Gudina, the Wonji-Shoa project constitutes an attempt to combine the smallholder focus of ADLI with agricultural commercialisation. This envisages a central role for the government in combining capital of investors, in this case a state-owned enterprise, and the land and labour of smallholders. Nonetheless, the need for a secure sugar supply to justify investment in the factory, which would otherwise favour a directly-managed plantation, requires the government to discipline the cooperatives through coercion and monopoly conditions in the sugar sector. The case again demonstrates the risks to outgrowers. The outgrowers are exposed to variations in the cost of living and agricultural inputs, yet have little bargaining power in negotiations with the buyers of their produce as they lack market information and there are no alternative buyers.

Conclusions

Despite varying considerably regarding the types of investor, crops and systems of production employed, the case studies of agricultural investments presented here do highlight some common themes which are relevant to the analysis of the role of land tenure in Ethiopian social policy. First, each of the cases demonstrates a commitment by the government to avoiding smallholder displacement where possible, in line with the peasant security discourse. Nevertheless, each of the cases has demonstrated that new forms of commercial agriculture being introduced by the government, either by state enterprises or through its management of investors, do bring new forms of risk for smallholders.

Second, despite the universal pretensions of the peasant security discourse, the case of Hawi Gudina highlights that this protection is in fact limited to settled smallholders. Government officials question pastoralists' land use and, in doing so, exclude pastoralists from land as social protection. This dismissal of the productive use of land by pastoralists echoes past attempts at agricultural commercialisation during the Imperial era where capitalist agriculture was established along the Awash River, displacing pastoral populations.

Third, while the government has attempted to promote forms of agricultural production that combine commercialisation with smallholder protection, agricultural investment is inherently in tension with the class homogeneity discourse. While restrictions on land transfers restrict the

processes of land accumulation and differentiation from within the smallholder sector, the promotion of agricultural investment is, nevertheless, creating a class of foreign and domestic capitalist investors. In the cases examined in this chapter, this transformation occurs on communal land and areas targeted for outgrower schemes in the highlands, and lowland pastoral areas that have not previously been cultivated by smallholders. In principle, outgrower schemes may offer the possibility of independent smallholders and investors negotiating on equal terms. However, in both examples examined here, smallholders involved in these schemes confronted not only agricultural investors but also state organisations for whom the expansion of outgrower schemes was an explicit objective. As such, the outgrower schemes examined have been little more than mechanisms for controlling and exploiting labour.

Fourth, the case studies highlight the importance of water in raising agricultural production. While the case studies show that the government has tried to limit the smallholder displacement, the need for irrigation water along the Awash and other rivers brings the viability of existing smallholder cultivation into competition with the commercial requirements of new agricultural investors. In the case of the Awash, the river is used by smallholders, investors, pastoralists and hydropower projects. It is not clear which groups will be given priority in the allocation of water rights.

Finally, the promotion of investment by the government is in keeping with the government's productivist, instrumental social policy discourse. This envisages a key role for the state in managing capital, land and labour in order to achieve the combinations of factors of production that it believes will best meet its national development objectives. Government assessments of the relative value of different types of smallholder production, pastoralism and other land uses have resulted in the promotion of a variety of forms of investment and new systems of production. In the cases studied, meanwhile, this allocation of factors of production by the state has left little room for the meaningful participation of people that supply Ethiopia's 'human capital' in key decisions regarding their livelihoods.

PART FOUR

INTEGRATING THE MACRO AND MICRO:

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ETHIOPIAN SOCIAL POLICY

9

Change and continuity in Ethiopian agriculture: The implications for social policy and development

This chapter draws on the case study findings presented in part three to address the second research question, namely: *how are social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?* In particular, the chapter assesses the implications of the micro-level case studies for the government's social policy and development strategies. To that end, the chapter relates the mechanisms operating in these micro-level case studies to the macro-level processes discussed in chapter five. In order to do so, I draw on the full set of cases from the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS), as well as nationally representative data on land and population from the Central Statistical Agency (CSA).

Following this introduction, the next section examines the spatial pattern of agricultural investment, deconstructing the 'marginal lands' narrative used to justify land leases and examining the implications of agricultural investment for social policy. The following section focuses on the smallholder sector and the objectives of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) and the land policy to combine productive, protective and egalitarian social policy objectives. The final section concludes.

Agricultural investment and state-mediated agrarian transformation

As discussed in chapter five, the government has promoted agricultural investment as part of wider push for commercialisation, including foreign and domestic, public and private investors. Nevertheless, this process of transformation has not been uniform across the country. Indeed, government policy under the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and past administrations has given rise to four broad categories of land, each of which has been affected differently by recent commercialisation pressures. First, by far the majority of land suitable for crop production in the highlands is farmed by smallholders. Second, there remain a few hectares of communal land used for grazing or firewood collection within each highland village. Third, primarily in highland areas, there are a number of state farms established by the *Derg* but retained by the EPRDF. The final category, from the perspective of the state, constitutes

the majority of the lowlands, comprising a great variety of pastoral and agro-pastoral lands, land used for shifting cultivation and forests.

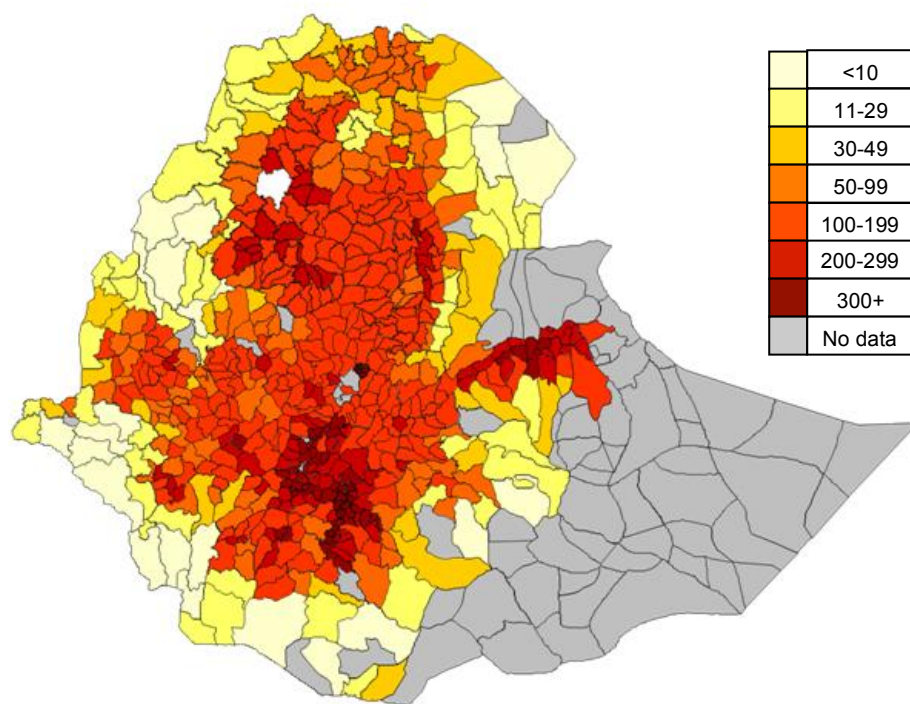
The previous use of investment land

Although government data do not contain information on the prior use of investment land, in Ethiopia variations in land use broadly overlap with population density. For example, rural highland areas with high population density are almost always in smallholder-dominated areas, while low population densities in lowland border areas signal pasture, areas used by shifting cultivators and forests (see map 9.1). Consequently, important insights into the types of land leased to investors can be obtained by comparing investment locations with population density.

Map 9.2 shows the locations of land already leased to investors, where data are available. Comparison with map 9.1 reveals that the vast majority of investment land is located in sparsely-populated, lowland border regions, including: West Tigray, North Gondar, Gambella, South Omo and Bale. Furthermore, to promote investment, the federal government has instructed regions to identify ‘banks’ of land suitable for investment projects and claims to have identified 3.7 million hectares so far, all of which is currently ‘unused’ (discussed below). Map 9.3 presents the location of this land for all regions except Oromiya and Somali, for which sub-regional breakdowns are unavailable. It shows a similar pattern, with all the main targets for investment situated in lowland areas—nearly 2 million hectares in Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz, 400,000 hectares in Afar, as well as substantial amounts in northwest Amhara and South Omo. Many of these investment hotspots are near major rivers, including the Awash in eastern Oromiya and Afar, the Omo in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR), the Baro in Gambella and the Nile in Benishangul-Gumuz. Indeed, state resources are being used to build dams, which could support large-scale irrigation, on the Omo and the Nile.

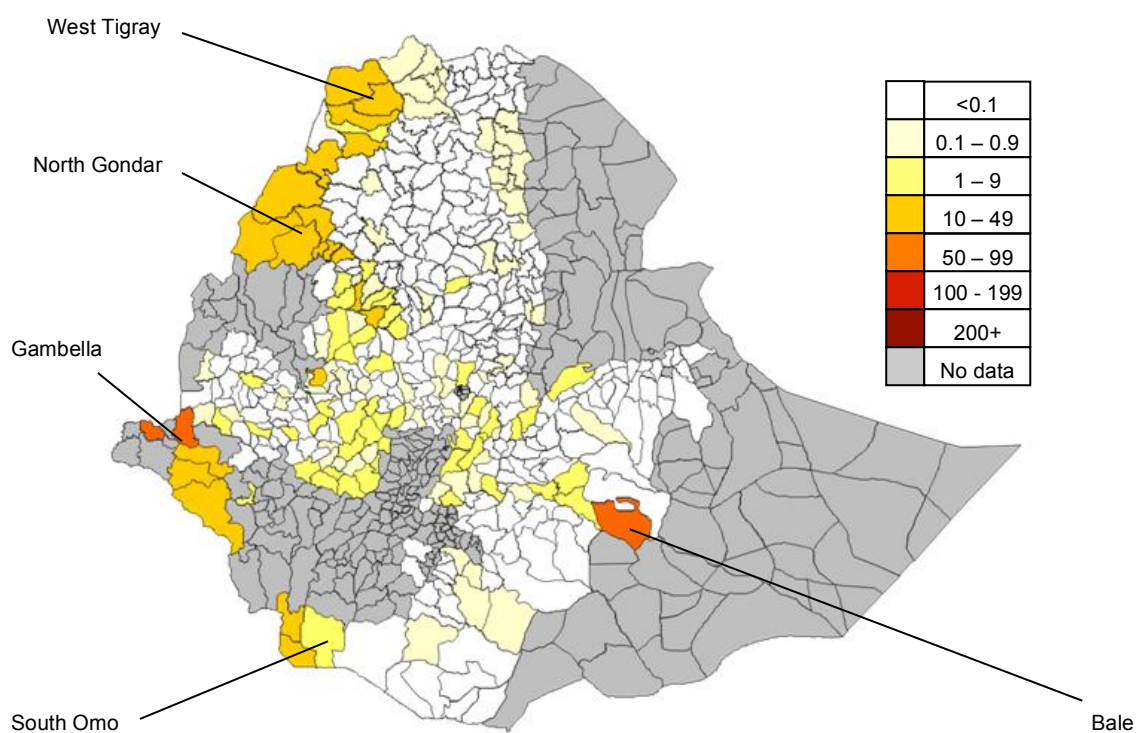
As well as identifying ‘available’ land in the lowlands, the government provides investors with incentives to establish projects in remote areas. For example, projects in Gambella, Benishangul and South Omo are eligible for a tax holiday on top of those used to encourage export-oriented investments (FDRE 2003, para. 4). Areas not previously under cultivation are prioritised by exempting investors from land use fees for up to five years if they use improved seeds and irrigation (ONRG 2001, para. 2). After these holidays expire, land fees are set to encourage investment in target areas. For example, remote land in Tigray is leased for 40 *birr* per hectare per year compared to 100 *birr* for more accessible land (TNRG 2000 (Ethiopian Calendar - EC)), while in SNNPR, prices range from 30 to 117 *birr* per hectare (SNNPR Investment Agency 2008).

Map 9.1. Population density (people per sq. km) by *wereda*



Sources: CSA, UNOCHA

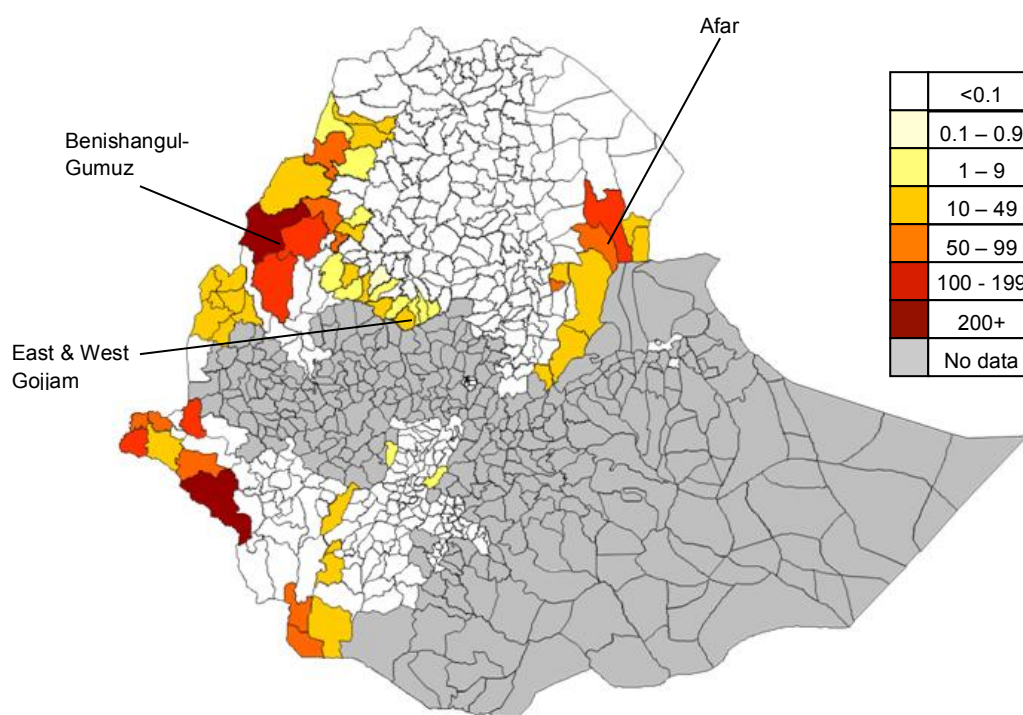
Map 9.2. Land leased to investors (000s ha) by *wereda*



Sources: Own calculations based on CSA, Amhara Investment Agency, EIA, MoARD (2011), SNNPR Investment Promotion Agency.

Note: Data for Oromiya do not distinguish between pre-implementation and active projects. Data for Tigray are only reported by zone, so totals have been equally divided between the relevant *wereda*.

Map 9.3. Land identified for investment (000s ha) by *wereda*



Sources: Own calculations based on CSA, AISD / MoARD, Amhara Investment Agency, Oromiya Investment Commission, Tigray EPLAUA.

Note: Data for Asosa zone, Benishangul-Gumuz are only reported by zone, so the total has been equally divided between the relevant *wereda*.

Table 9.1. The regional distribution of investment land

	Foreign investments in active projects (ha)	Identified for future investment (ha)	Land identified for investment as percentage of total area
Addis Ababa	171	0	-
Afar	10,000	409,678	6
Amhara	20,702	347,430	2
Benishangul-Gumuz	83,931	691,984	14
Dire Dawa	0	0	-
Gambella	202,012	1,238,005	42
Multiregional	45,017	-	N/A
Oromiya	214,003	438,212	2
SNNPR	79,770	529,181	5
Somali	0	N/A	N/A
Tigray	300	0	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>655,907</i>	<i>3,654,491</i>	<i>5</i>

Sources: Own calculations based on AISD/MoARD, Amhara BoEPLAU, CSA, EIA, MoARD (2011), Oromiya Investment Commission, SNNPR Investment Agency (2008), Tigray EPLAUA.

Table 9.1 presents the distribution of investment land by ethnic region. Data on active projects reflect leases that were negotiated by regional governments before the creation of the federal Agricultural Investment Support Directorate (AISD – see chapter five). Land identified for future investment is now managed by the AISD on behalf of emerging regions, while the established regions continue to allocate land to investors. The data show that the main sites of active projects are Gambella, Oromiya, Benishangul-Gumuz and SNNPR, while Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz are the main locations of land for future investment. As relatively small regions, the land identified for future investment constitutes 42 per cent of the surface area of Gambella and 14 per cent of Benishangul-Gumuz. Although Amhara, Oromiya and Tigray have all leased land or identified land for future investment, for the time being these processes have been conducted in a far more selective manner, with investment land constituting a far smaller proportion of the regional surface area. The significance of this ethno-regional variation is explored in chapter 10.

Deconstructing ‘unused’ land

The government claims that all land identified for future investment and the vast majority already leased was previously ‘unused’. This land can therefore be leased to investors to expand the country’s total cultivated area without damaging existing production and livelihoods. As former Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, stated, ‘We have three million hectares of unutilized land. This land is not used by anybody. This land should be developed’ (cited in ProKerala News 2011). Nevertheless, the categorisation of all this land as ‘unused’ is highly questionable. The labelling of ‘unused’ land is conducted from the state’s perspective (Scott 1998, Borras and Franco 2010). ‘Unused’ land may include some land which is objectively unused for any human purpose, as well as land used by people for purposes which are considered insufficiently productive or are invisible to the state.

Government officials and policy statements use the terms ‘unutilized’ (Meles, cited in ProKerala News 2011), ‘empty’ (respondent SR4, see appendix B), ‘unsettled’ (MoFED 2002, p. 53) and ‘uncultivated’ (Esayas Kebede, head of the AISD, cited in McClure 2009, and respondent OR3) interchangeably to describe investment land. These labels betray the construction of land utilisation from the highland perspective of settled crop cultivation, which, as discussed in chapter four, views pastoralism as unsustainable. This construction of ‘unused’ land is also reflected in government land use statistics. According to past studies cited by the government to minimise the significance of investment compared to the agricultural sector as a whole (Rice 2010, Vidal 2010, Berhanu Kebede 2011), approximately 75 million hectares in Ethiopia are suitable for cultivation, while only 14 million hectares are currently cultivated, leaving about 60 million hectares ‘free’.⁴⁷ Clearly, this identification of ‘cultivation’ with ‘use’ dismisses the importance of other land uses.

The promotion of investment draws on the government’s productivist social policy discourse which envisages a key role for the state in bringing together factors of production—land, labour and capital—in the most effective combinations. From the government’s perspective, pastoralism

⁴⁷ I have been unable to trace the origin of these estimates, which do not refer to specific sources. They differ considerably from calculations in the World Bank’s recent report on agricultural investment, which suggested that less than 5 million hectares of currently *uncultivated* land are suitable for cultivation (Deininger and Byerlee 2010, p. 110).

is an unsustainable and inefficient land use compared to investors using modern agricultural production techniques. In the words of Dr Abera Deresa, State Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development,

‘at the end of the day we are not really appreciating pastoralists remaining as they are. We have to improve their livelihood by creating job opportunities. Pastoralism, as it is, is not sustainable. We want to change the environment’ (cited in Butler 2010).

Indeed, a major new government programme aims to relocate pastoralists voluntarily to planned villages, and in Gambella, the objective is to resettle about three quarters of the population in coming years (Davison 2011). As with past resettlement schemes, the government claims the new villages will improve access to social services and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which is being rolled out in the emerging regions. As yet there are no empirical studies which examine the links between investment and the resettlement programme. Nevertheless, the scale of each—42 per cent of the land in Gambella identified for investment and approximately 75 per cent of the population relocated—calls into question government claims that resettlement and investment are entirely separate processes.

So what criteria have actually been applied to identify ‘unused’ land? While land registration has proceeded rapidly in the highlands, it has not been attempted in Afar, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz or lowland parts of SNNPR (Solomon Abebe 2006, respondents SR1, SR2, SR3). This is due both to limited state capacity in these areas and the logistical challenges of registering land used by pastoralists or shifting cultivators. Nevertheless, while regions such as Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz, which are among the weakest of the regional administrations, have rapidly identified vast tracts of land which the federal government confidently claims to be ‘unused’, respondents in the Amhara Bureau of Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use (BoEPLAU), widely recognised as the most capable, stated that the rapid identification of large amounts of suitable investment land was beyond their capacity (respondent AR2). Consequently Amhara annually identifies comparatively small tracts of land for investment. Similarly, although the Oromiya Bureau of Land and Environmental Protection identified a land bank for investment, a senior respondent in the department admitted that the data were unreliable (respondent OR1). Serious questions therefore must be raised regarding the criteria used to identify ‘unused’ land. In many cases it is impossible to tell with certainty whether this land is unused or merely unregistered.

In addition to the land used by pastoralists and leased to investors in Hawi Gudina, discussed in chapter eight, there are numerous examples where the label ‘unused’ is contestable. In Gambella, despite low population density, land access was the subject of ethnic conflict even prior to the arrival of investors (Dereje Feyissa 2005). Reports now suggest that local people are unhappy that land they previously used has been leased to investors (Daniel and Mittal 2010, Vidal 2010, The Oakland Institute 2011b). In addition, a report by the International Institute for the Environment and Development (IIED) finds that the classification of all investment land as ‘wasteland’ is highly questionable and claims that at least some of the land leased in Benishangul-Gumuz was previously used for shifting cultivation and grazing (Cotula *et al.* 2009). Finally, land allocated to investors in West Tigray may be sparsely-populated but the same area has been the destination for resettlement from the highlands, including Geblen (respondent IR3). According to my

respondents in Geblen who had taken part in the resettlement programme, these areas have already been seen tensions between 'indigenous' pastoralists, investors and new arrivals (respondents GM12, GM24).

Inaccurate classifications of 'unused' land therefore stem both from inadequate land surveys as well as the conceptualisation of land use from the perspective of settled agriculture, which dismisses the use of land by other livelihoods. As such the identification of 'available' land involves a value judgement by the state regarding the productivity of existing land use.

Investment in the highlands

Although most investment land lies in sparsely-populated lowlands, map 9.2 and the case studies show that some land, which is or could be cultivated by smallholders, has been leased in heavily-populated areas. As such, the smallholder and investor sectors are not entirely separate, as frequently claimed by government officials. First, several state farms have been leased to investors in recent years. These include 3,000 hectares in Bale, Oromiya leased to the Government of Djibouti to grow grain (Wudineh Zenebe 2010) and an unspecified amount of land in Hadiya and Kembata, SNNPR leased to flower farms (respondent SR4).

A second category in highland areas is communal grazing land, plots of which have been leased to mostly domestic, but also some foreign, investors. As in Turufe Kechema and Korodegaga, on the whole these plots are relatively small (usually 5-10 hectares). However, a project established by an Indian investor, Karuturi, on communal land in Bako, Oromiya is exceptionally large, covering 10,000 hectares (Dessalegn Rahmato 2011, Messele Fisseha 2011). Like land in pastoral areas, most communal land is unregistered and is considered by government officials to be a government, not a community, resource. The case studies in chapter eight found that leases of communal land are subject to discussion between local government officials and local people at community meetings. Nevertheless, a minority of respondents stated that these meetings were a mere formality and they did not have the power to reject the projects in practice. Investors pay a land lease fee to local government but provide no financial compensation to the community, instead making informal promises that they will contribute to communities by building schools or clinics, and providing employment. Nonetheless, the leases ignore the valuable role of communal land in local livelihoods (Platteau 2005), further eroding the protection provided by the land policy.

Perhaps the most controversial category of investment land is that already cultivated by smallholders. Despite economic challenges in the smallholder sector, smallholders retain considerable political importance and the government is keen to avoid displacement. Nevertheless, in certain cases, government assessments of agricultural potential have concluded that labour-intensive smallholder agriculture has been insufficient to take advantage of available agricultural resources. Investors potentially offer the capacity to develop resources, in particular water for irrigation, beyond that of smallholders. All of this land leased to investors in the highlands could and, according to ADLI, should be distributed to smallholders, addressing landlessness and, based on intensive cultivation, achieving a higher yield per hectare. Instead, the government increasingly gives priority to investors, reversing its position on the productivity of smallholder agriculture.

Social policy and the subsequent social context of production

The case studies examined in chapter eight constitute three examples drawn from the range of possible trajectories from prior to subsequent land use. Table 9.2 identifies examples of these trajectories, where available, as well as the principal changes involved in the systems of production. I have found no investments in which uncultivated land (type 5 in table 9.2), communal land (type 6) or state farms (type 7) have been leased to investors using outgrowers, a change which could combine investment with smallholder expansion to address land shortages. Instead, investments on 'unused' land, like that in Hawi Gudina, tend to be large, mostly foreign-owned investments with capital-intensive production employing some wage labourers (type 1). In contrast, investments on communal grazing land, like those in Korodegaga and Turufe Kechema, are usually small and involve domestic investors employing wage labourers (type 2).

As a consequence of commercial pressures and the government's desire to boost foreign exchange earnings, communally held land—small areas of grazing land in highland villages and larger expanses in the lowlands—is being transferred to a tenure system that in important respects approximates private ownership. Until recently, customary leaders in many peripheral, lowland areas administered land with relatively little state involvement. Such customary tenure, like state land ownership, provides some protection for community members against displacement (Platteau 2005), albeit likely differentiated based on gender and insider-outsider hierarchies. In contrast, while land leased to investors remains state owned and regulated, investors' contracts provide long-term secure access, the ability to borrow against landholdings and even rights to transfer land to other investors (Oromiya Investment Commission n.d., Badrinath 2011). Although the strong state role in approving land transfers and investors' plans means that this tenure system falls short of full privatisation, the land rights bestowed on investors nevertheless go well beyond those of smallholders. In the process, however, the narrative of 'unused' land has been used to question pastoralists' land use and to discursively delineate boundaries to the peasant security discourse, excluding people practicing pastoralism and shifting cultivation from the protection of the land policy. Expansion of the PSNP in emerging regions appears to be the only state social policy to address the new risks faced by these populations.

The only examples of outgrower schemes have occurred on individual holdings, as in Waqqee Xiyyoo and Hawi Gudina (type 8). Indeed, the government's preference is for investors in smallholder areas to establish outgrower schemes in the expectation that investor capital can be combined with the land and labour of smallholders. Outgrower schemes have been suggested by some observers as one means by which agricultural projects could produce 'win-win' situations, incorporating smallholders into investment projects, while boosting productivity (Cotula *et al.* 2009, von Braun and Meinzen-Dick 2009). Nevertheless, for such schemes to benefit outgrowers, there must be a degree of balance in negotiating power between the parties to the agreement (Little and Watts 1994). This requires the outgrowers to be able to decline an agreement if it is not in their interests and, as Li (2011) shows, often requires state intervention to support outgrowers who are in a weak bargaining position. In the cases examined, however, while state organisations were heavily involved in the establishment of outgrower schemes, the state did not intervene to safeguard the interests of the outgrowers, but rather supported the investors and ensured the submission of the outgrowers to the government's development strategy.

Table 9.2. A typology of changing land use

To	From	'Unused' land	Communal land	State farms	Individual holdings
Investor plantation		Type 1 – Creates some employment, threatens pastoralist livelihoods – <i>e.g. Hawi Gudina (Oromiya), Karuturi (Gambella), Saudi Star (Gambella)</i>	Type 2 – Loss of communal resources (for all), gain of employment (for a few) – <i>e.g. Korodegaga (Oromiya), Karuturi (Oromiya)</i>	Type 3 – State employees to private employees – <i>e.g. Govt of Djibouti (Oromiya), flower farms (SNNPR)</i>	Type 4 – Transformation of smallholders into wage labourers – <i>e.g. flower farms (Oromiya)</i>
Outgrower scheme		Type 5 – Combines investment with re/settlement, threatens pastoralist livelihoods – <i>No examples</i>	Type 6 – Loss of communal resources (for all), gain of land (for a few) – <i>No examples</i>	Type 7 – Transformation of wage labourers into smallholders – <i>No examples</i>	Type 8 – Smallholders inserted into monetary economy – <i>e.g. Hawi Gudina, Waqqee Xiyyoo (Oromiya)</i>

Although outgrower schemes are prioritised, *wereda* officials do have the right to expropriate smallholders' land 'where it believes that it should be used for a better development project', giving local government enormous power and leaving smallholders with little possibility of appeal (FDRE 2005b, para. 3(1)). On the whole, displaced smallholders with registered land do receive the legally-required compensation of ten times their average annual income (FDRE 2005b, para. 8(1)). However, it is questionable whether this is sufficient given that farmers are not allowed to buy replacement land. One of the main examples of smallholder displacement (type 4) is the expanding flower industry, in particular in central Oromiya. These projects require land close to airports for quick transportation to European markets, while the technologically advanced nature of production and the controlled conditions required in floriculture are considered to make such projects unsuitable for outgrower schemes. Nevertheless, they have been permitted by the government because they are labour-intensive projects that are expected to employ more labourers than had been supported by previous smallholder agriculture, limiting any impact on migration.

The case studies in part three show that the government has gone to considerable lengths to avoid smallholder displacement. Indeed, for the foreseeable future it seems highly unlikely that investment will be allowed to displace the peasantry, as has been a concern of some 'land grab' articles (e.g. GRAIN 2008). On the whole, investors have only been allowed access to land in smallholder areas when they have convinced the government that they have the potential to achieve a major increase in productivity, either by developing water resources for irrigation or based on knowledge of high value crop production such as flower farms or castor. The promotion of investment does not, as yet, therefore present a major threat to the implementation of the peasant security discourse in the highlands. Nevertheless, the case studies in chapter eight demonstrate that the loss of communal land, new forms of production and greater market integration do inevitably bring new forms of risk for smallholders.

The result of this pattern of transformation is that agricultural investment is likely to create little employment. In the highlands, investments utilising outgrowers rely primarily on household labour, as was the case with previous agricultural production. In some cases, the labour-intensive nature of flower production may create some additional demand for labour compared with previous production, easing local unemployment problems. As an indication, Mano *et al.* (2011) estimate that flower farms employ some 20,000-33,000 people, although the paper makes no comparison with the labour requirements of previous smallholder production. Any additional employment created is, however, dwarfed by the enormous problems of land shortage and unemployment in rural Ethiopia. In lowland areas meanwhile, the capital-intensive nature of production means that there are likely to be few job opportunities created. In the absence of empirical studies, it remains unclear who will benefit from these jobs—local pastoralists, highland migrants or foreigners.

Overall, the result is a gradual change in the agricultural landscape of the highlands from a relatively homogeneous group of smallholders, to a majority of smallholders who control the majority of the land, interspersed with a few capitalist farmers employing some local landless or land poor day labourers. While these two types of farm operate side by side, they are administered by the government under distinct laws with little possibility for transfer between the two sectors.

Social policy in the smallholder sector

The majority of the smallholder sector nevertheless remains largely unaffected by these investment processes. Consequently, the findings of the smallholder case studies are of the utmost relevance to the government's social policy and development strategies. Despite ADLI's claim that the objectives of equality, smallholder security and raising agricultural productivity can be complementary, these case studies suggest that in practice they are frequently in tension with one another.

The case studies concluded that rapid population growth has undermined the protection provided by the land policy. The result of these long-term trends is that the vast majority of people—at least 75 per cent in Turufe and virtually everyone in Geblen and Korodegaga—lack access to the ideal set of agricultural inputs, in particular land. Consequently, for the vast majority, the land policy no longer provides a guarantee of a livelihood but merely partial subsistence. Inevitably, the mechanism of population growth has produced different effects in the distinct contexts of the sites. In Turufe, the relatively egalitarian distribution of land, allocated by the *Derg* but maintained by the EPRDF, and the recent distribution of irrigated land in Korodegaga mean that land is divided into plots which in many cases are too small to sustain the annual purchase of improved inputs, limiting agricultural productivity and the marketable surplus. Meanwhile, in Geblen, the shortage and poor quality of land is such that farmers produce just a fraction of their households' food requirements each year. As such, the PSNP and other emergency programmes constitute the main source of household income, while the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP), which focuses primarily on agricultural livelihoods, is subject to many of the constraints of existing crop cultivation. Consequently, there is little potential for graduation and the PSNP, rather than playing a transformative role, has been subsumed by the local system of production.

In all sites, the moratorium on land redistribution has resulted in growing inter-generational differentiation through exclusion from land access. While there are no statistics on the size of the landless population, the latest census suggests that 22-25 per cent of the population in 2007 were aged between 18 and 35 in 2008 (CSA 2008), most of whom would have been too young to be allocated land by the government at the time of the last land redistribution. In ox-plough systems, this differentiation also has an inherent gender bias since while men can sharecrop or rent in land, landless women, who are not expected to plough, have no means of accessing an agricultural livelihood except through a husband.

Despite the failings of the social policy strategy, between the minimal, dependent security provided by the land policy and the PSNP, the majority of landholders achieve a basic subsistence, albeit with little potential for advancement. Given the shortage of off-farm employment opportunities and absence of urban social protection, the necessity of short-term security favours staying in their rural villages rather than migrating in search of other opportunities and running the risk of destitution. Consequently, both the land policy and the PSNP play an important role in limiting the flow of urban migration. In many cases, local government officials are not only aware of this disincentive to migrate but purposefully exploit it, keeping people in rural villages until such time as the government creates other economic opportunities and migration becomes less politically problematic.

Three of these findings constitute fundamental challenges to the social policy strategy. First, as a result of population growth, land shortages mean that for most farmers the land policy does not provide livelihood security but only partial subsistence. Second, the PSNP and the FSP have been incorporated into existing systems of production, supporting the failing land policy but offering little potential to resolve the food insecurity problem. Finally, for many, small landholdings present a barrier to adoption of improved inputs, undermining government attempts to raise agricultural productivity.

These case studies are just a few examples of agricultural contexts drawn from the enormous variety that exists in Ethiopia. The cases were selected to illustrate particular processes, rather than maintaining any pretence of being national representative. The question remains therefore whether these findings are exceptional or whether the mechanisms operating in the cases are part of broader processes influencing agricultural production elsewhere. The remainder of this section draws on a number of data sources to shed light on the relevance of these findings beyond the case studies already examined. First, although the ERHS dataset does not claim to be nationally representative, the sites were selected to cover a wide range of the agro-economic diversity of the country (Dercon and Hoddinott 2009). As such, identification of similar processes across contrasting sites gives an indication of their broad-based nature. Second, the CSA publishes representative data on land use and population, which can be used to examine national and regional trends.

Land shortages and the guarantee of an agricultural livelihood

Table 9.3 classifies ERHS households based on the agricultural inputs required in the particular system of production. The data indicate that the shortage of agricultural resources in Turufe, Geblen and Korodegaga are far from exceptional since in only two ox-plough sites, Sirbana Godeti and Debre Birhan, do households with the ideal set of inputs constitute a slim majority. In most sites, these 'ideal' households—the norm assumed in government policy and those who stand to benefit most from the protection of the land policy—constitute a small minority. While the proportion of these 'ideal' households seems small, it should be noted that it is actually likely to constitute a significant over-estimate since the ERHS sample excludes most landless people.

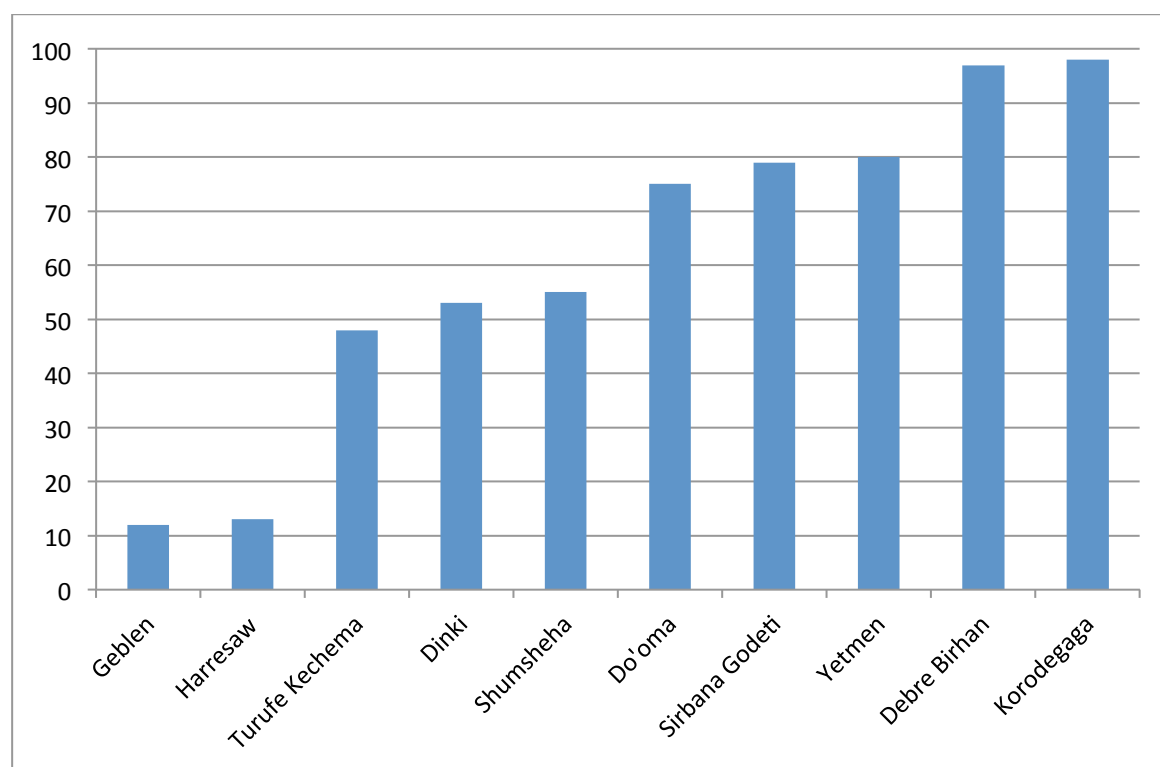
Although the land shortage is by no means the only challenge facing smallholder agriculture, the distribution of landholdings clearly demonstrates that land access is among the principal constraints. Figure 9.1 shows that Geblen and Harresaw, the two ERHS sites in Tigray, face a particularly severe shortage among ox-plough sites, with households with at least one hectare constituting the exception rather than the norm. In most sites, the land shortage is not so severe, although scarcity is such that substantial proportions of landholders have less than one hectare. In only a few sites is the land shortage relatively minor. Nevertheless, even in sites such as Korodegaga, the panel format of the ERHS masks the impact of the moratorium on land redistribution, which is leading to inter-generational divisions, with many young adults lacking any land.

Table 9.3. ERHS households classified by access to agricultural inputs

Percentage of households	Ideal set of inputs	Land but no labour	Land, labour but no oxen	Basic set of inputs	Landless
Ox-plough (rainfall sufficient)					
Yetmen	45	14	14	25	2
Sirbana Godeti	55	16	17	12	0
Turufe Kechema	24	11	33	32	0
Debre Birhan	57	18	8	17	0
Ox-plough (drought-prone)					
Harresaw	0	42	24	34	0
Geblen	0	35	14	51	0
Dinki	1	14	26	55	4
Shumsheha	1	23	31	45	0
Korodegaga	9	10	13	67	0
Do'oma	31	14	19	36	0
Hoe-enset					
Adele Keke	88	2	-	10	0
Imdibir	24	0	-	76	0
Aze Debo'a	53	0	-	47	0
Adado	70	2	-	28	0
Gara Godo	66	2	-	32	0

Source: ERHS 2009

Figure 9.1. Percentage of households with at least one hectare in ox-plough sites



Source: ERHS 2009

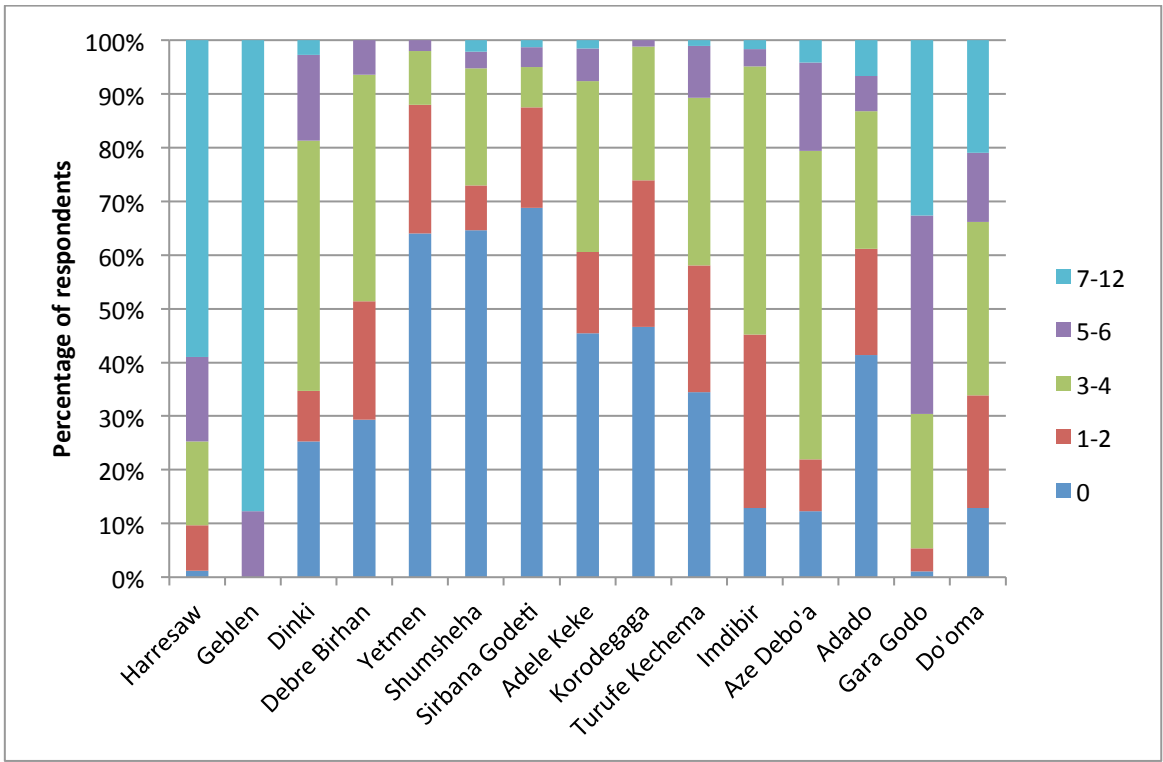
As a result of the intensive land use in areas of hoe-enset cultivation, an ‘ideal’ land threshold of 0.5 hectares is assumed. Based on this lower threshold, table 9.3 suggests that the available land is better able to support the existing population, even though these sites are among the most densely-populated areas of the country (see map 9.1). Indeed, with the exception of Imdibir, in all hoe-enset sites, farmers with the ideal set of agricultural inputs constitute the majority. Nonetheless, the significant proportion of those with access only to the basic set of agricultural inputs in table 9.3—those with less than 0.5 hectares—show that in all sites but Adele Keke, substantial minorities of the households nevertheless lack the minimum holding required for an agricultural livelihood.

ADLI assumes that by guaranteeing land access, the land policy will guarantee an agricultural livelihood. Clearly, with population growth and increasingly severe land shortages the extent to which landholdings provide the means of subsistence and surplus for a household is likely to diminish. This trend is illustrated by ERHS data, presented in figure 9.2, which show the number of months in which households faced food shortages in the year prior to the 2009 survey after all income sources were taken into account. Across all ERHS sites, only 31 per cent of respondents claimed that they faced no food shortage in the previous year. ERHS data confirm that the minority of respondents whose crop production is sufficient for their household’s consumption have considerably more land than those who face shortages.

Figure 9.3 presents ERHS data on off-farm income as a proportion of total income. This shows that in the poorest sites where the PSNP operates, such as Geblen, Harresaw, Adele Keke and Korodegaga, not only is agricultural production problematic, but off-farm opportunities are also extremely limited. In these communities, rather than offering an alternative to agricultural livelihoods, off-farm activities are constrained by widespread poverty, which means that farmers have little disposable income, providing little demand for services and goods (Mellor and Dorosh 2010).

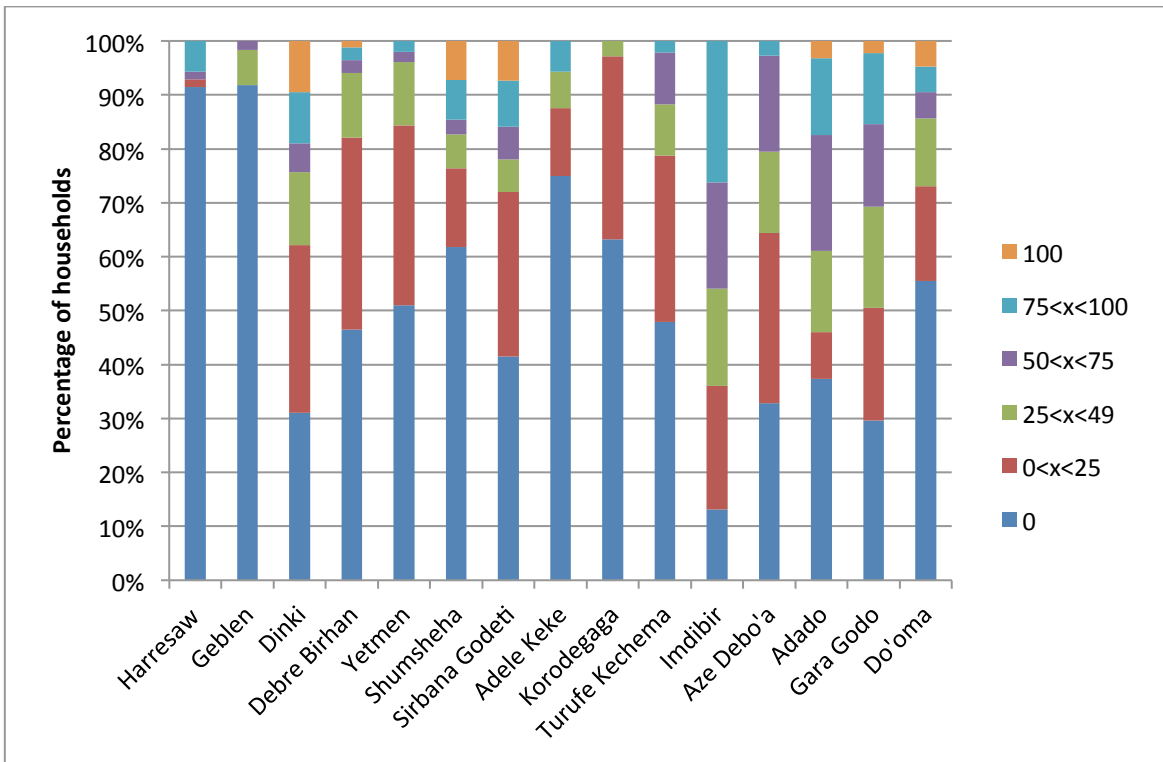
CSA data on Ethiopia’s total cultivated area, presented in chapter five, constitute an anomaly to this trend of rising population and land shortages. These data show that since the early to mid 1990s the total cultivated area has increased by approximately 50 per cent, fairly uniformly across the country. During this period the increase has more than kept pace with population growth with the result that average landholdings have slightly increased. Given that serious land shortages have been reported in many parts of the country for decades, this expansion is surprising. If indeed the data are accurate, they raise doubts about the quality of the land being brought into cultivation, as well as the impact on communal land (Dercon and Vargah Hill 2009). In any case, any expansion in cultivated area is unlikely to keep pace with the rate of future rural population growth, which is predicted to increase by 41 per cent between 2010 and 2030 according to the Population Division of the United Nations’ Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Moreover, FAO data on the area used for annual and perennial crops over a longer period show that despite this increase, the amount of land per economically active person (EAP) has fallen from more than 1 hectare per person in the 1960s to less than 0.5 hectares (see figure 9.4). The result is that, despite recent increases in cultivated area and productivity, production per household has declined over the last 30 years (figure 9.5). The evidence is therefore indisputable that land shortages are eroding the land policy’s guarantee of an agricultural livelihood.

Figure 9.2. Months in which households struggled to meet food needs in last year



Source: ERHS 2009

Figure 9.3. Percentage of household income from off farm activities / employment



Source: ERHS 2009

Figure 9.4. Land cultivated per economically active person in Ethiopia

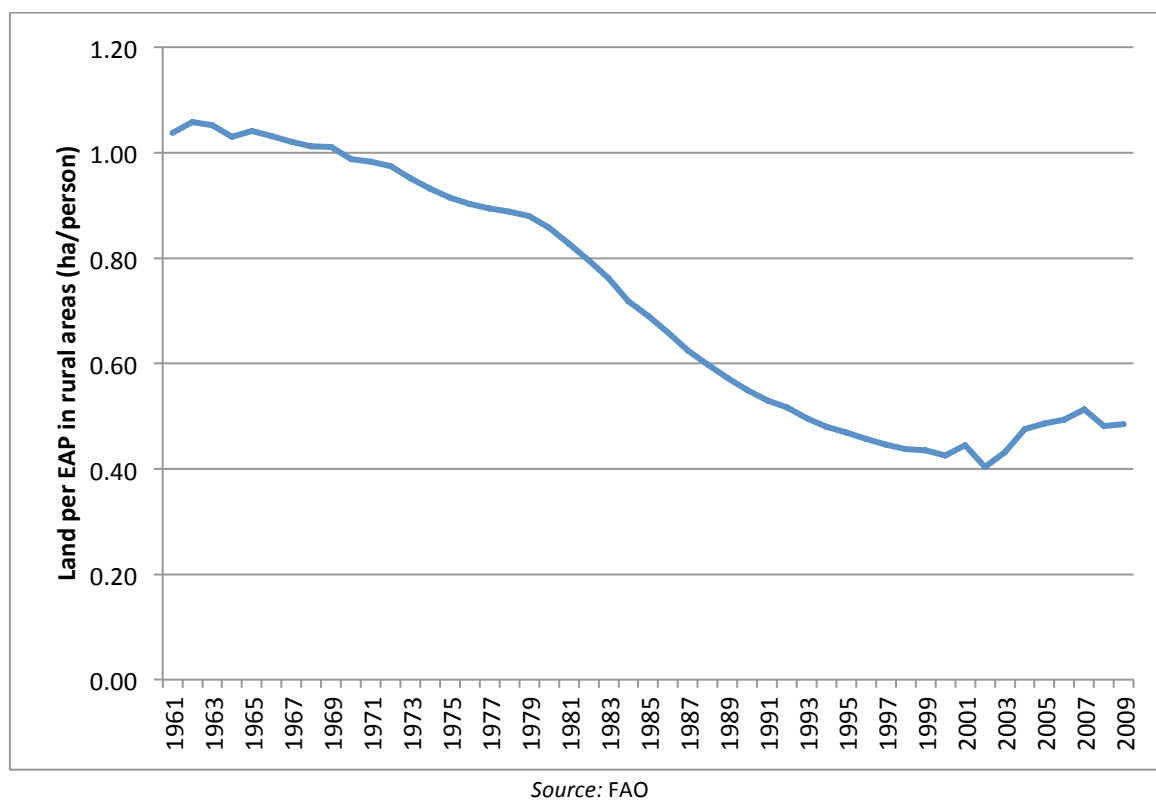
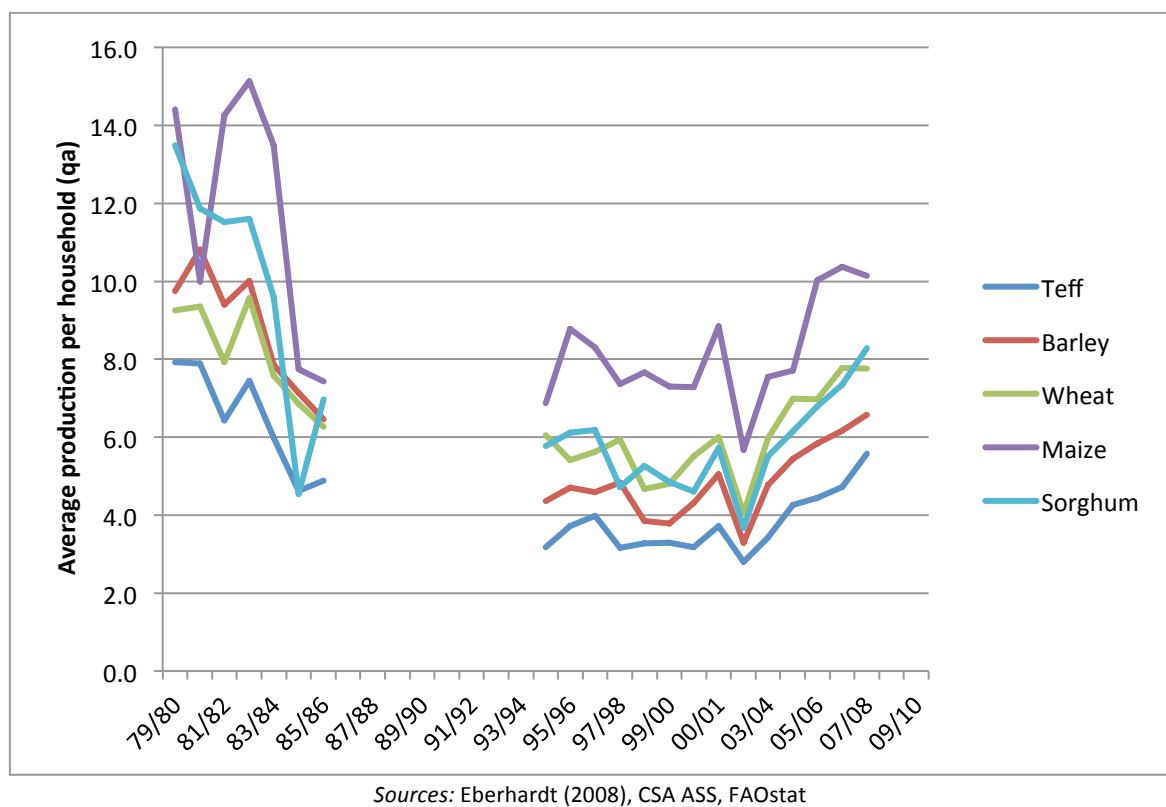


Figure 9.5. Average household production of major grains in Ethiopia

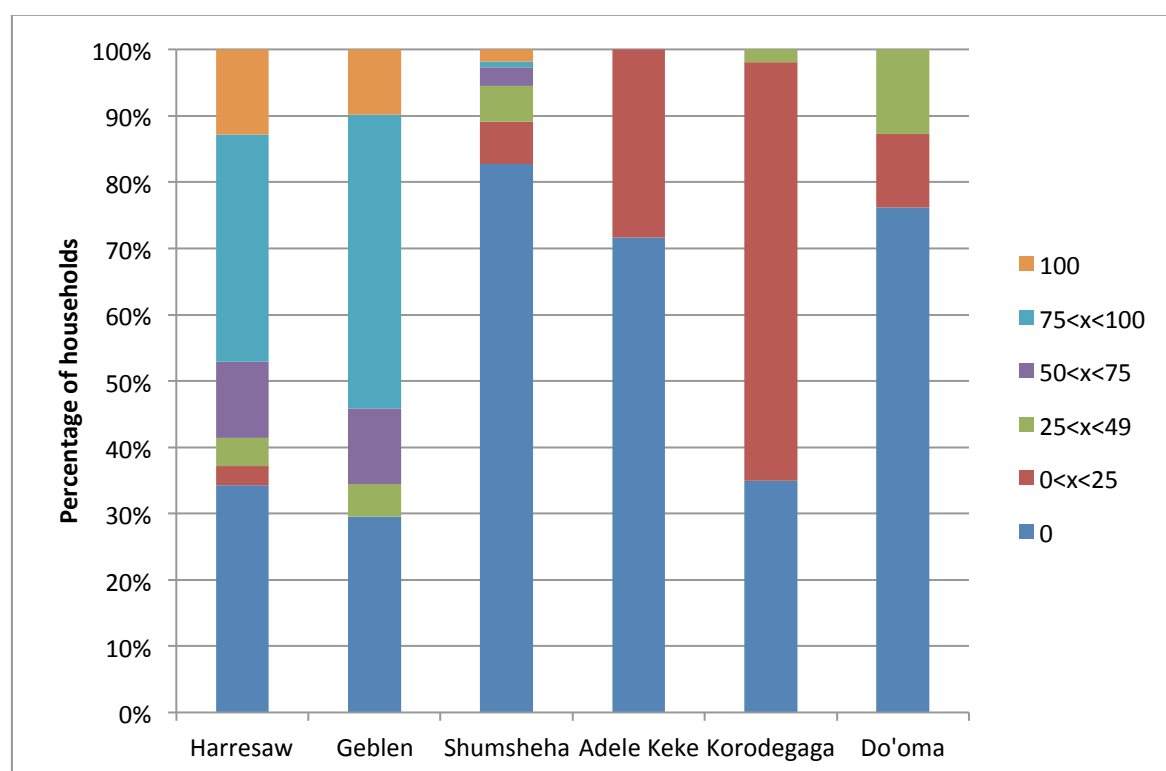


Land shortages, food insecurity and the PSNP

Chapter seven found that for a very large proportion of Geblen's residents, the shortage of land and other agricultural inputs is such that they produce just a fraction of their subsistence requirements in a normal year, while government attempts to promote graduation through improved agricultural production have no chance of success. In this context, the PSNP does not just guarantee short-term consumption to prevent distress sales of assets, but for many constitutes the main income, without which the community and the current system of production would not be viable.

The PSNP operates in six ERHS sites and for these, figure 9.6 shows the proportion of total household income represented by the PSNP. Since these data are based on just one year's production and are subject to annual weather patterns they should be cautiously interpreted. Nevertheless, the graph shows that in Harresaw, like Geblen, the PSNP constituted at least half of the income of nearly 60 per cent of households. Harresaw, like Geblen, suffers from a similar, though perhaps marginally less severe, land shortage and similarly unreliable rainfall.

Figure 9.6. PSNP as a percentage of total household income



Source: ERHS 2009

The remaining sites present a somewhat different picture. In Korodegaga the key constraint on agricultural production is irrigation rather than a land shortage. Consequently, in years when rains are good, as was the case prior to the 2009 ERHS, landholdings are sufficient to provide subsistence for most of the population, and the PSNP constitutes a relatively small proportion of participants' household income. Nevertheless, rains are extremely unreliable and the following year, when fieldwork was conducted, farmers experienced almost complete crop failure on rain-fed land. Although data are not available, the likelihood is that the 64 per cent of respondents

who participate in the PSNP would rely to a far greater degree on the programme in these years. In the remaining three sites, the PSNP provides support to between 20 and 30 per cent of the households. In Adele Keke and Do'oma the PSNP provided a relatively small proportion of the income of these participants. In Shumsheha, meanwhile, a few respondents rely heavily on the programme, while for others it constitutes a top-up to their own production.

While this analysis shows that Geblen constitutes the most extreme of the ERHS cases, a very similar pattern in Harresaw suggests that the degree of reliance on the PSNP is not entirely exceptional. In addition, there is likely to be a minority of households in other sites, like Shumsheha, who lack the land and other agricultural inputs necessary to achieve self-sufficiency and consequently rely heavily on the PSNP. For these people, ongoing government attempts to promote graduation through agricultural extension packages are unlikely to succeed. These findings question the government's framing of food insecurity as a naturally occurring problem related to unreliable rainfall, discussed in chapter four. Instead, the nature of Ethiopia's food insecurity is at least partially the outcome of ADLI's failings.

The case studies concluded that by linking access to land and the PSNP to residence within the community, these policies also limit migration, a conclusion supported by quantitative analysis of all ERHS sites which shows that younger people who are short of land are more likely to migrate (Gray and Mueller 2012). Furthermore, the HABP focuses almost exclusively on agricultural rather than off-farm livelihoods, in spite of their limited potential to resolve the problems of land short households. In doing so, these policies enable the maintenance of the status quo and, in the context of rapid population growth, lead to increasing numbers of food insecure households. There are massive barriers to resolving the food insecurity problem and, based on these findings, land is one of the most important of these. The reliance on the PSNP in highland areas is only likely to grow until the land issue is addressed and real efforts are made to support food insecure households to establish off-farm businesses or to create employment for them.

Land shortages and constraints on investment and productivity

Based on the analysis above, a large proportion of Ethiopian farmers have very small plots of land that are insufficient to generate a surplus and to sustain regular investment in improved inputs. With most farmers experiencing some degree of food shortage on an annual basis, there is clearly no surplus—in the strict sense of the word—for sale. For an individual farmer the inability to use improved inputs means lower productivity and a smaller margin relative to subsistence. At the macro level, the low rate of use of improved inputs means lower productivity, a smaller agricultural surplus and weaker linkages between agriculture and industry, thereby undermining ADLI's economic objectives. Indeed, ERHS data in table 9.4 show that the use of improved inputs across the research sites is extremely low, like the national averages presented in chapter five. As a result, recent quantitative analysis has shown no change in agricultural productivity in the ERHS sites between 1994 and 2009 (Fantu Nisrane *et al.* 2011).

With few exceptions, households using improved seeds and fertiliser are those with relatively large landholdings who rent in additional land. Across the ERHS sites, respondents using improved seeds have on average 1.92 hectares of their own land, compared to 1.45 hectares for those using 'local' seeds. Meanwhile, those using chemical fertiliser have 1.95 hectares compared to 1.57

hectares for those who do not. These findings are in part influenced by government policy, which increasingly prioritises farmers with the best access to agricultural inputs (Vaughan 2011). Nevertheless, this is itself a reflection of the realities of the existing land distribution—when seeds and fertiliser were previously available to all farmers on credit, large numbers were unable to sustain investment in purchased inputs with the result that they were unable to repay their loans. Consequently, in Turufe Kechema, the government has now decided to concentrate resources on those farmers who offer the best chance of sustaining use of improved inputs, namely those with relatively large amounts of land. While government policy influences which households have access to improved seeds, this is much less relevant in the case of fertiliser use. Chemical fertilisers are relatively widely available in the markets near Turufe Kechema, nevertheless relatively large landholders tend to be the main users.

Table 9.4. Percentage of households using improved inputs

	Chemical fertiliser	Improved seeds	Manure
Ox-plough (rainfall sufficient)			
Yetmen	9	4	18
Sirbana Godeti	6	6	6
Turufe Kechema	17	10	27
Debre Birhan	4	3	19
Ox-plough (drought prone)			
Harresaw	7	2	45
Geblen	0	1	40
Dinki	0	1	24
Shumsheha	0	2	26
Korodegaga	2	7	28
Do'oma	0	29	6
Hoe-enset			
Adele Keke	5	4	71
Imdibir	0	10	52
Aze Debo'a	4	26	53
Adado	1	4	39
Gara Godo	3	25	33

Source: ERHS 2009

The results therefore suggest that, as in Turufe, the small size of landholdings in many parts of Ethiopia constitutes an additional constraint on the use of improved inputs, in addition to the supply problems and the weak price incentives discussed in chapter five. This finding is supported by past research which concludes that there is a minimum threshold of assets, below which it is impossible for households to begin the process of accumulation (Dercon 2003, Carter *et al.* 2004, Devereux *et al.* 2005). While there may be an inverse relationship between land size and productivity per hectare, there is also a minimum land size required to sustain investment in purchased inputs and achieve self-sufficiency (Devereux *et al.* 2005). Indeed, Mellor and Dorosh (2010) estimate that just 48 per cent of Ethiopian farmers have the land and rainfall required to adopt improved inputs.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown that implementation of ADLI has fallen far short of the ambitious social objectives to which it aspires. At best, state land ownership provides a minimal degree of protection, enabling smallholders to retain land in the face of production shocks but offering little means of overcoming the problems that they face. However, the small size of landholdings means that for many landholders land access is a guarantee only of a partial subsistence, rather than a secure livelihood. In addition, despite the universal pretensions of the policy, protection differs substantially by age, gender and ethnicity. In particular, the moratorium on future land redistributions and the restrictions on land sales have resulted in growing inter-generational divisions between older landholders and young landless adults. Meanwhile, given the societal expectation that women should not plough land themselves, provision of social protection through land access means that women only have access to an agricultural livelihood through dependence on men. Finally, the government has dismissed the land use of ethnic groups in lowland border regions in order to promote large-scale agricultural investment. In doing so, the government has discursively established an additional boundary to the protection provided by the land policy along ethnic lines.

The small size of landholdings also constitutes a barrier to increased agricultural productivity. The division of land into sub-economic plots means that even using improved inputs many farmers are unable to produce a marketable surplus with which to reinvest in purchased inputs. The result is low agricultural productivity that limits linkages between the agricultural and industrial sectors, undermining the structural transformation that might address the land shortage. Based on this analysis, the nature of the food insecurity problem in Ethiopia is at least partly the result of government policy, in particular in relation to land, rather than merely due to unpredictable weather patterns, as asserted by the government. In cases, the PSNP is used to support the existing system of production, enabling the government to avoid confronting key challenges facing Ethiopian agriculture.

The promotion of export-oriented agricultural investment can be seen as a response to the failings of ADLI, albeit in a way that avoids confronting the politically sensitive issue of reforming the smallholder sector. Chapter five showed that at the macro level this means a change from the almost exclusive focus on internal production linkages in ADLI to a more trade-based development strategy. Meanwhile at the micro level, this adjustment in development strategy is contributing to an emerging dualism in Ethiopian agriculture between the smallholder and investment sectors. This dualism is rooted in the government's contrasting approaches to land administration in different parts of the country. While in the highlands state ownership of land continues to prevent the displacement of the peasantry, in the lowlands, particularly in areas with potential for irrigated cultivation, large-scale land leases administered by the federal government approximate private property for investors. In terms of social policy, the result is that while smallholders in the highlands are provided with a form of minimal, dependent security, lowland populations, notably pastoralists, are excluded from the guarantee of land access as a means of social protection, and their livelihoods are increasingly threatened. These processes are producing very different social relations of production in the highlands, where small and micro-holders using family labour predominate, and in the lowlands, where large-scale capitalist production is

expanding utilising mechanised production techniques and employing a few agricultural labourers.

The political economy of social policy and agricultural development in Ethiopia

This chapter draws together the preceding analysis to analyse the political economy of social policy under the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and to answer the final research question: *what are the implications of the social policy strategy for state-society relations?*

One important task is to explain why, given that for at least twenty years commentators have characterised Ethiopian agriculture as unsustainable and claimed that the sector is at a 'crossroads' (Dessalegn Rahmato 1994, Devereux *et al.* 2005, Githinji and Gebru Mersha 2007), the government has made no major reforms to the smallholder sector. The chapter therefore examines the political economy of the status quo, as well as the implications of reforms proposed by the government's critics. As discussed in chapter four, the main alternative forms of land tenure are: state ownership, which draws on the peasant security, productivist and class homogeneity discourses for legitimacy; private property, a pre-requisite for neo-liberalism; and communal ownership, which overlaps in important respects with the group focus of the ethnic egalitarian discourse.

The chapter also highlights the implications of the land policy, and regional variation in its implementation, for state-society relations. In particular, the context-specific resolution of tensions between competing social policy discourses has important implications for the balance of individual and group rights, the balance of power along class and ethnic lines, and prospects for political development.

Following this introduction, the next section analyses the political economy of social policy, focusing on land policy in the smallholder and investment sectors, the tensions between the land policy and ethnic federalism, and the role of donors. The chapter then assesses the implications of the government's development strategy for democratisation and state-society relations. Looking ahead, I then examine alternatives to the government's policies and discuss potential sources of political transformation. The final section concludes.

The political economy of land and social policy

This section examines the political economy of land and social policy, considering land policy in the smallholder and investment sectors, the tensions between ethnic federalism and the land policy, and the role of foreign donors.

Land, smallholders and agricultural investment

The EPRDF's social policy and development strategies have for twenty years prioritised state land ownership. While previous chapters have demonstrated that the social and economic objectives of the land policy have met with limited success, the social policy discourses identified in chapter four are closely related to political considerations that continue to influence decision-making. It is as a result of these political considerations that demand for land deriving from population growth and commercial pressures has not resulted in wholesale privatisation, as expected by property rights theory (North 1981).

First, state ownership is a populist policy, which appeals to the EPRDF's base. Drawing on the peasant security discourse, EPRDF officials frequently portray the EPRDF as the sole protector of the peasantry and warn that opposition parties would enable displacement and the re-emergence of oppressive landlords (for example, Ethiopian Television 2010). Farmers interviewed during fieldwork and respondents to a larger quantitative survey (Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002) unsurprisingly express a desire to keep their land and the security that it provides. As such, the government's peasant security discourse strikes a chord with smallholders who, for the time being, constitute the majority of rural society. Nevertheless, the growth of the young landless population continues to expand the inter-generational division between older landholders, who benefit from the status quo, and the young landless, with no stake in the existing agricultural system, undermining the populist nature of the policy.

Second, past land redistributions and current transfer restrictions prevent the emergence of powerful landholders who are rooted in society, the sort of economic actors who, Boone (2003) suggests, might present a threat to government authority. Indeed, the obliteration of the powerful landholding class was the one of the main objectives of the *Derg's* 1975 land reform (Clapham 1988, Dessalegn Rahmato 1993a) and the class homogeneity discourse, which highlights the dangers of oppressive landlords, is a common feature of government policy statements. Instead, control by state organisations of almost all the resources required for smallholder reproduction—land, irrigation, fertiliser, improved seeds, credit and food aid—brings the state into direct contact with and enables control over a weak and dependent peasantry (Dessalegn Rahmato 1993b, 2009, Tronvoll 2009).

Third, in line with the productivist discourse, by restricting transfers the land policy limits urban and inter-ethnic migration, which the government considers to be the 'source of economic, political and social instabilities' (MoFED 2002, p. 56). Chapter five showed that all highland regions restrict land transfers and that the most severe restrictions are in the most food insecure areas where migration is most likely, rather than areas of commercial potential. This suggests that the restriction of migration is as important an objective of the land policy as preventing the

emergence of a landholding class. Nevertheless, while the cases in part three of the thesis conclude that the land policy and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) impede migration, they do not stop it altogether. In particular, growing numbers of young landless are among those most likely to migrate, swelling the ranks of the urban disenchanted to the concern of the government.

The promotion of agricultural investment, meanwhile, can be seen as the government's attempt to compensate for the economic problems of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI)—a foreign exchange crisis and an inability to generate a large agricultural surplus—while avoiding transformation of the politically-sensitive smallholder sector. The costs of this policy are borne largely by politically marginal pastoralists and, to a lesser degree, through an additional squeeze on smallholders living in the vicinity of the few investments permitted in highland areas.

The most obvious beneficiaries of agricultural investment are the emerging class of foreign and domestic capitalist farmers who receive preferential treatment from the government. For the first time since the 1975 land reform, the promotion of investment is creating a class of economically powerful landholders. Restrictions on land transactions keep the investment sector legally distinct from the smallholder sector, preventing smallholders from developing into capitalist farmers. Consequently, investors are foreign businesses, urban elites or returning diaspora, rather than successful local farmers with strong links to local communities. Investors are therefore unlikely to be able to bring together economic power with strong rural support to constitute a political challenge to the government. Rather, as chapter eight showed, investors rely on the state for continued access to agricultural resources—in particular land, which remains under state ownership—and to control labour. Therefore, while high international commodity prices give investors considerable economic power and, in all probability, influence over government policy, the mutual dependence between investors and the state suggests that this relationship is more likely to lead to coordination than conflict (Boone 2003).

Despite the political importance of the smallholder sector, smallholders do not have much influence over agricultural policy. Indeed, this is likely to reduce as investors become more influential, with agricultural policy increasingly oriented towards the needs of capitalist farmers rather than the peasantry. While investment is concentrated in lowlands, it is likely to affect highland smallholders in a number of ways. First, the government has forced a relatively small number of farmers into investment projects, as described in chapter eight. The productivist discourse is used to justify the government's direction of 'human capital' to the most productive use, leaving little room for individual choice. Second, to the extent that investors produce crops for the domestic market, surplus-producing smallholders will face increased competition. Given economies of scale in agricultural production, the result could be a growing division between wage foods, produced primarily by capitalist farmers since smallholders will be increasingly unable to compete, and peasant foods, produced by largely by subsistence farmers.

If the investment strategy achieves its objectives in earning foreign exchange and financing industrial expansion, an emerging group of industrial capitalists stands to reap the rewards of a favourable policy environment. The existing private sector is heavily dominated by organisations linked to the ERPDP, in particular the MIDROC business empire and the ERPDP-controlled endowments (Markakis 2011, Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael 2011). However, the export-

oriented investment strategy also presents political risks. Devaluation means that the emerging urban middle class will find imported consumer goods increasingly expensive, and, should international food prices remain at high levels, reliance on imported food will raise living costs, leading to discontentment among urban residents and industrialists seeking cheap labour.

Ethnicity and land administration

This emerging dualism between the smallholder and investment sectors has important consequences for the ethnic egalitarian discourse, which prioritises the land rights of ethnic groups. The tensions between ethnicity and land administration have been resolved in contrasting ways within the highland smallholder sector, and in lowland areas dominated by pastoralism and shifting cultivation.

The role of ethnicity in land administration in the highlands is representative of the EPRDF's ambiguous position regarding ethnicity more broadly. While ethnic federalism undoubtedly has important implications for land tenure, land laws focus on class, rather than ethnicity. The debate on ethnicity is polarised between two extremes, with opposing camps drawing on very different interpretations of Ethiopian history (Endrias Eshete 2003, Merera Gudina 2006). On one side, centrists emphasise Ethiopia's historical unity and fear its break up. These views are usually associated with urban areas, the diaspora, where ethnic identities are frequently less clear-cut, and Amhara region. On the other hand, regionalists use narratives of internal colonisation by the Amhara and Tigrawi of the rest of Ethiopia as the basis of claims for greater ethnic autonomy, even secession (Asafa Jalata 2005). The EPRDF has occupied the middle ground, attempting to neutralise ethno-national sentiment (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003) through the establishment of ethno-regional administrations, while retaining decision-making power at the federal level. This position has brought political advantages, allowing the EPRDF to divide its opponents, attacking centrists using ethno-nationalist arguments and ethnic parties based on 'superior class analysis' (Vaughan 2003, p. 192). It has, however, also brought problems, building expectations of regional autonomy that the government has been unable to fulfil (Clapham 2009). The result is that the EPRDF has raised the possibility of ethnic autonomy but restricted its implementation, dividing political opposition but leaving almost everyone dissatisfied.

Defeat of the *Derg* by Eritrean, Tigrawi and Oromo ethnic movements made some form of ethnic administration inevitable. However, the importance of Oromiya to Ethiopia is also one of the principal concerns limiting the EPRDF's federalist intentions. The Oromo constitute the largest ethnic group and Oromiya is the largest ethnic region, occupying a central position in the country, surrounding the capital, Addis Ababa, and including many of the most economically important agricultural areas. While Eritrean secession in 1993 and the loss of sea access was a major blow, the secession of Oromiya would constitute an existential threat to Ethiopia (Baxter 1978, Clapham 1988). As such, devolution of meaningful decision-making power to representative regional administrations, including permitting a role for ethnicity in land administration, would risk creating new opportunities for ethno-political mobilisation and the advancement of secessionist claims.

Although the TPLF and OLF coordinated their activities immediately prior and subsequent to the fall of the *Derg*, as the TPLF expanded its interests to the whole of Ethiopia, it created its own

Oromo party under the EPRDF umbrella, the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO) in competition with the OLF. The ODPO—and the EPRDF-affiliated parties in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR)—consciously targeted young, educated and ambitious people to take up key positions, rather than established and locally respected elders, who in many cases had been involved with the *Derg* or the OLF (Vaughan 2003, Markakis 2011). Rather than mobilising the Oromo 'from within', as dictated by revolutionary democracy, the ODPO usurped local elites and established a new political class which relied on the EPRDF for their power and status. However, rather than neutralising Oromo nationalism, ethnic federalism has raised expectations of ethnic autonomy, contributing to greater ethno-nationalism in parts of Oromiya. The EPRDF has promoted an interpretation of Ethiopian history that views the country as a colonial creation and has strengthened ethnic identities by requiring local languages, such as Afaan Oromo, in education and regional government. For many Oromo, 'democratisation' is increasingly translated into a desire for the federal government to be led by an Oromo, as the largest ethnic group. Clearly, such ethnic mobilisation presents considerable dangers for a party, which continues to be identified with a Tigrawi minority.

The absence of an explicit role for ethnicity in land administration can be attributed to these political calculations regarding ethnic federalism, as well as the dangerous implications of a territorial approach to ethnicity in a country where, despite the assumptions of ethnic federalism, ethnic heterogeneity is common. Although existing literature is quite limited, the ethnic tensions in Turufe Kechema are clearly not unique. Indeed, the only attempt to create an inventory of ethnic conflicts concludes that disputed land access and territorial boundaries have been the main causes (Abbink 2006b). While these conflicts cannot be solely attributed to federalism, federalism has created expectations of ethnic autonomy and the correction of historical injustices, while ethnic-based local politics create political competition along ethnic lines.

Although ethnic federalism has exacerbated certain ethnic conflicts, there is no simple relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and conflict over land. The territorial implications of ethnic federalism clearly resonate with the clan-based customary land administration in Turufe, exacerbating existing ethnic tensions. In contrast, local conceptions of the ethnic divisions between Tigrawi and Irob in Geblen reject simple classification, but prioritise fluid ethnic identities and historical bonds of cooperation. As such, the peaceful relations within the community have been maintained despite the territorial implications of federalism.

The relationship between highland centre and lowland periphery, meanwhile, has been characterised by a long history of inequality going back to the original incorporation of lowland areas into the Ethiopian Empire in the nineteenth century (Markakis 2011). Like past regimes, which sought to change the 'backward' practices of pastoralists to more 'civilised' sedentary farming (Donham 2002, Amdissa Teshome 2006), the EPRDF aims to settle pastoralists, whose livelihoods are considered unsustainable. Furthermore, the dominance of smallholder agriculture in government policymaking has facilitated smallholder expansion into areas previously used by pastoralists, in particular through resettlement programmes, and, as discussed in chapter nine, a marginal lands narrative has been employed to question pastoralists' existing land use and justify large-scale investment leases. The result has been increased conflict between pastoral groups searching for pasture and water access, as well as between pastoralists and new arrivals in areas they have historically used (Fekadu Beyene 2009).

The government's promotion of investment and the centralisation of investment administration also raise important questions regarding the compatibility of ethnic self-determination with a centrally-defined development strategy. The government's political priority is to avoid smallholder displacement. Consequently, investment promotion focuses on sparsely-populated areas. To this end, the federal government draws on the productivist discourse, re-centralising control over investment administration to enable the transfer of 'unused' land to investors. As discussed in chapter five, this has led to variation in the powers of regional administrations, since the established regions have resisted federal attempts to recentralise power over investment, while weaker administrations in emerging regions have delegated powers. Investment processes therefore bring the principles of ethnic federalism and the right of ethnic groups to manage their land in their own interests into direct conflict with the productivist discourse, according to which the government should turn 'unproductive' land over to 'more productive' users. The result is the continuing exploitation and political marginalisation of ethnic groups in lowland regions for the benefit of the centre, in direct contradiction of the principle of self-determination that underpins ethnic federalism.

The role of foreign donors in Ethiopian social policy and politics

Although domestic interests are crucial to understanding the political economy of Ethiopian social policy, the status quo is also dependent on external support, without which it would be all but impossible for the government to retain smallholder agriculture in its present form. There are several reasons why donors support the government through the PSNP, emergency food aid and other programmes, and 'take the land policy as a given' (respondent FD5, see appendix B), despite evident failings in agricultural policy and political representation.

The first is that donor agencies are in need of development success stories in order to justify their existence and approach to development. Although the EPRDF is an authoritarian government pursuing state-led development, it is accomplished at dressing its strategy in the rhetoric of market-based development, poverty reduction and democracy. Paradoxically, therefore, donors support and, on occasion, claim credit for the successes of a development strategy that is incompatible with democracy and at odds with the neo-liberal assumptions of the poverty reduction approach.

Second, Ethiopia is of considerable geo-strategic importance to many key donors. Despite its authoritarian tendencies, donors view the EPRDF as the safest bet for maintaining domestic and regional stability, and as an ally against fundamentalist Islamists in neighbouring countries. This was most clearly demonstrated when a US Congress bill to introduce sanctions against Ethiopia for human rights violations was side-lined explicitly because of Ethiopia's importance as an ally (Borchgrevink 2008).

Third, the Ethiopian government has long resisted donor attempts to force policy change, on several occasions demonstrating its willingness to forgo aid rather than adhere to donor demands (Borchgrevink 2008, Furtado and Smith 2009). For example, the government's refusal to pursue additional structural adjustment reforms in the 1990s led to the withdrawal of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a reduction in World Bank funding but no change in government policy (Borchgrevink 2008). Meanwhile, in the 1990s the World Bank attempted to convince the

government to privatise land, yet the vehemence with which their calls were met means that most donors now regard the issue as off limits (Devereux *et al.* 2005). Furthermore, the government refused to release arrested opposition politicians following the disputed 2005 federal elections, even though donors withdrew General Budget Support (GBS). After a six-month aid hiatus and despite no change in government policy, the government was rewarded in 2006 with the Protection of Basic Services (PBS) project, which replaced GBS with ring-fenced aid for social services and is supported by 13 donors. As a result, aid flows actually increased from pre-election levels and, despite the absurdly one-sided elections in 2008 and 2010, donor criticism was minimal and many donors have subsequently announced further funding increases.

Finally, while it is easy to criticise donors, it must be acknowledged that they find themselves in a difficult position. As the EPRDF is well aware, the main means by which donors could exert influence—cutting off aid—is hard to reconcile with humanitarian concerns for millions of food insecure people. Given the government's refusal to countenance land reform, existing social protection programmes address the most pressing humanitarian concerns. As such, donors are limited to providing support while advocating greater respect for human rights and participation of societal groups.

The result, however, is that donor support enables the government to continue its existing policies towards the smallholder sector. Indeed, by providing aid, donors enhance the power and autonomy of the federal government with respect to interests in society and other state organisations, reducing potential for organised political opposition. Meanwhile, the flow of external resources limits state dependence on domestic tax revenues and, consequently, is likely to limit the potential for the development of a social contract based on taxation in exchange for representation and social provision (Bräutigam *et al.* 2008, Hujo and McClanahan 2009, Niño-Zarazúa *et al.* 2011). Meanwhile, the political calculations of both the Ethiopian government and its foreign donors continue to favour the status quo—smallholder agriculture that increasingly falls short of self-sufficiency—and Ethiopian agriculture continues to sit at a crossroads, twenty years after the EPRDF came to power.

Land, ADLI and state-society relations

The land policy and ADLI have important implications for state-society relations and prospects for political development. This section considers, in turn: the significance of institutional choices with respect to land administration for state-society relations; and the implications of the land policy and ADLI for political representation.

Land and state-society relations

The nature of state-society relations and tensions between individual and group interests play out in different ways based on the spatially-differentiated social policy previously discussed. In the highlands, the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses are invoked to limit displacement and prevent the emergence of a powerful agrarian class rooted in society. Though problematic, the land policy provides a form of minimal security to landholders at the cost of dependence on and subordination to the state. Meanwhile, the productivist discourse justifies

restrictions on markets in land and labour, prioritising the state-defined 'national interest' over individual freedoms. In contrast in the lowlands, the centralisation of land administration, discrimination against pastoral livelihoods and class differentiation between capitalist farmers and agricultural labourers exclude populations from protection by the land policy and contribute to their deepening political marginalisation. The devolution of land administration and the restrictions imposed by land tenure therefore vary based on the commercial potential of the area and the potential threat posed by different groups to the authority of the federal government. Boone's (2003) theory of institutional choice, discussed in chapter three, provides a partial explanation of this variation. However, in focusing on class relations and communal structure as means of concentrating political power, her model fails to predict state responses to ethno-political mobilisation.

Under ethnic federalism regional and local government administrative institutions have been established in all parts of the country based on the demand for autonomy by ethno-nationalist movements, rather than in response to the demands of economically powerful regional elites. Indeed, traditional Oromo society, like that of many ethnic groups in SNNPR, has widely been acknowledged to be relatively egalitarian and non-hierarchical (Baxter 1978, Bassi 1996, McClellan 2002, Asafa Jalata 2005) and observers have long noted the challenge of uniting spatially and culturally diverse Oromo groups under a single Oromo nationalist message (Vaughan 2003). This diversity was the case prior to Oromiya's incorporation into Ethiopia, when some 'complete kingdoms' existed alongside 'small acephalous clusters' (Baxter 1978, p. 284), and subsequently, when the OLF achieved only modest gains in its fight against the *Derg*. Indeed, Baxter (1978, p. 285) even concludes that '[t]here are very few situations in which one Oromo can order another to do anything', suggesting the limited ability of the Oromo elite to mobilise political support. As such, according to Boone's (2003) framework, the state would be expected to rule through centralised 'administrative occupation' in Oromiya, which she defines as: 'Concentrated institutional structure; centralized authority. State institutions seem suspended balloon-like over the rural localities' (Boone 2003, p. 32). In contrast, the government has deconcentrated the state apparatus, creating regional and zonal administrations. Ironically, however, the danger that ethnic federalism might contribute to greater ethnic awareness and potential for ethno-political mobilisation prompted the EPRDF to usurp local elites, co-opting a new political elite and the *gadaa* institution in order to retain centralised power. This strategy closely resembles Boone's definition of 'usurpation': 'Deconcentrated institutional structure; centralized authority. A dense network of state institutions in the countryside provides infrastructure for state agents to "rewire the circuits of local authority" and micromanage local process' (Boone 2003, p. 32).

The response to pressures for agricultural commercialisation in the periphery does, however, fit Boone's (2003) thesis. Though the lowlands were formally incorporated into Ethiopia since the end of the nineteenth century, until recently there were limited economic benefits to the state of establishing state structures in areas occupied by pastoralists. Consequently, many lowland areas remained beyond effective centralised control and maintained *de facto* self-administration within ethnic and clan groups. State interventions under the Imperial government were limited to the extraction of resources through collection of tribute, and the slave and ivory trades (Donham 2002, Garretson 2002, Tadesse Wolde 2002, Dereje Feyissa 2006). Meanwhile, under the *Derg*

and then the EPRDF, the main intervention by the central state was to resettle smallholders to areas classified as 'unused', easing highland population pressure.

In recent years, however, the international drivers of the 'land grab' and growing demand for farmland have raised the economic potential of these lowlands and the returns to state consolidation. Meanwhile, the absence of powerful elites and hierarchical community structures in those areas means that the federal government has been able to ignore local elites, centralising control of land administration and ruling through 'administrative occupation', leading to the classification of huge swathes of land as 'unused'. Consequently, the expansion of large-scale agriculture through state-administered leases, improvements in infrastructure and the settlement of pastoral populations expands the effective reach of the state in terms of territory and population, bringing these regions under direct administration and consolidating state boundaries.

The implications of social policy for democratisation

The prospects for democratisation in Ethiopia would appear to be poor given the findings of comparative studies which suggest that the usual forms of rule in agrarian societies are autocracy and oligarchy (Moore, Jr. 1967, Huntington 1991, Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992). In particular, the peasantry, the dominant class in Ethiopia and the central pillar of ADLI and its social policy discourses, has played an ambiguous role in democratic transitions in other countries (Moore, Jr. 1967, Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992).⁴⁸ In contrast, the urban working class, miniscule in Ethiopia, has been the most consistently pro-democratic force elsewhere, largely due to its interests in broadening political representation and its ability to act collectively (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992, Acemoglu and Robinson 2005). Similarly, the middle class, also small and fragmented in Ethiopia, has, at times, played important roles in democratic transitions, often in coalition with the working class.

These challenges were recognised by former Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi. He argued, however, that Ethiopia's revolutionary democracy offers a means of transforming and mobilising the peasantry to participate in the political process. As discussed in chapter four, the land policy is attributed a central role, since it prevents differentiation and ensures homogeneous class interests,

'an atomised peasantry has traditionally been the social base of autocracy rather than democracy and we needed to transform our political base in the peasantry to sustain democratic change as well as economic transformation. Commercialisation of small-scale agriculture was the only path open to us to firmly ground democracy in our country' (Meles Zenawi 2006).

The case studies in this thesis highlighted the absence of independent organisations representing smallholders' interests. Farmers' cooperatives are closely linked to the government, and most banks and microfinance organisations are party or state-owned. Meanwhile, in Turufe and Waqqee Xiyoo the *gadaa* had been co-opted. From a liberal democratic perspective, this

⁴⁸ A notable case where the peasantry did actually constitute a force for democracy is in the Scandinavian countries, where a coalition between independent smallholders and the working class was central to the advancement of democracy and a social democratic welfare state (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992).

weakness of civil society organisations and opposition political parties is a serious impediment to democratisation since there is little pluralism in representative organisations. Government restrictions on political organisations and electoral competition have understandably therefore drawn much criticism (Pausewang *et al.* 2002, Abbink 2006a, Aalen and Tronvoll 2009, Tronvoll 2009, 2011, Human Rights Watch 2010). Notably, the 2005 elections were marred by allegations of vote-rigging and dubious recounts that returned the EPRDF to power (Tronvoll 2009).⁴⁹ Political space for opposition parties has reduced since 2005, and the EPRDF won 99 per cent of the seats at the 2008 local and 2010 federal elections, leaving Ethiopia as an effective one party state (Aalen and Tronvoll 2009, Tronvoll 2011). In addition, the 2009 law on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) defined any NGO receiving more than 10 per cent of its funding from foreign sources as a foreign organisation, thereby banning them from 'political' activities, including civic education, gender equality and human rights (Human Rights Watch 2008b).

Nevertheless, this lack of political competition is by no means contrary to revolutionary democratic ideals. Revolutionary democratic representation is based on the mobilisation of the population in mass associations, promoting participation and debate within the party but discouraging political competition. This mass mobilisation has actually increased following a split in the TPLF leadership in 2001, which led to the purging of Meles' opponents. A process of 'renewal' (*tehadso*) has re-configured party-state links, fusing party and state structures from the leadership to the grass roots and resulting in ever greater state penetration of rural society (Tronvoll 2009, Vaughan 2011). As part of this process, the EPRDF embarked on a massive drive to increase party membership from 760,000 in 2005 to more than 5 million in 2010 (Tronvoll 2009, Vaughan 2011). Arguably, this enrolment could be taken as a sign of the strength of revolutionary democracy.

In reality though, it is not clear that revolutionary democracy involves any significant degree of political representation. Assessing revolutionary democracy on its own terms, the original assumption that the peasantry is a homogeneous group with common interests is evidently invalid. Land shortages have resulted in differentiation between landholders and landless, substantial minorities are involved in pastoralism and shifting cultivation, and growing numbers of wage labourers work for investors. Increasingly, therefore, individuals and households in rural areas, let alone urban ones, have plural interests and require greater political pluralism to ensure representation.

Even with respect to the smallholder majority it is hard to see how the government is truly accountable to its base. In Geblen, and other parts of Tigray, where the TPLF continues to enjoy relatively widespread support, community meetings observed during fieldwork offered a mechanism by which residents could engage with and criticise local administrators. However, there is no clear system by which these complaints are directed up through the government chain to influence policy (see Segers *et al.* 2009). Meanwhile in Oromiya and SNNPR, the EPRDF created new political parties that co-opted a new political class reliant on the EPRDF for their power but

⁴⁹ The army broke up demonstrations against the results, resulting in the deaths of 200 protestors and the imprisonment of several thousand supporters. Subsequently, the entire leadership of the opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) was arrested and convicted on charges of 'outrage against the constitution' (Blunt 2007). Although party leaders were released in 2007 having apologised for the post-election violence, several have since gone into exile.

with little legitimacy in the eyes of their ethnic constituencies. Indeed, the case study findings accord with existing literature which concludes that policymaking is extremely centralised and hierarchical (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003, Amdissa Teshome 2006). Initiatives, policies and quotas formulated by a small EPRDF elite are implemented at the local level largely without consideration for local realities and interests in rural villages (Segers *et al.* 2009). In part, this can be attributed to the impact of ADLI and the land policy at the local level. In contrast to the lofty objectives of increased wealth, security and empowerment, the land policy restricts mobility, keeping peasants poor and providing a form of minimal security based on dependence on the state and adherence to the instructions of local government administrators.

The peasant security and class homogeneity discourses consider insecurity and inequality to be the consequence of the operation of free markets. However, rather than empowering farmers to make choices from a position of economic security, these discourses justify paternalist state interventions which restrict individual freedoms in the name of security and equality. This paternalism is central to revolutionary democracy, which requires the vanguard party to lead the peasantry and to make decisions in their supposedly common interests. Here, of course, lies the fundamental problem—revolutionary democracy is premised on the idea that a modern state, with all the resources and power entailed, when brought into direct contact with poor smallholders will make decisions in their interests based on an ideological commitment to the peasantry. In the absence of any organised interests demanding representation, there is little chance of such benevolence.

Beyond the status quo: Land, social policy and political development in Ethiopia

This section looks to the future, beyond the current impasse, examining the competing arguments for alternative forms of land tenure, and the likely sources of political change, which might transform land ownership and social policy.

The debate on the land question

Government social policy is the product of the EPRDF's attempt to balance the competing demands of multiple societal cleavages and a challenging set of domestic and international structural constraints in the pursuit of an ambitious developmental project. The resulting policies pay little attention to individual rights and demand the sacrifice of politically marginal groups in a way that is deeply problematic from a democratic or human rights perspective. It is hard, however, to accept the suggestion by critics that the government's resistance to land reform can be attributed solely to a lack of 'political will' (Berhanu Abegaz 2004, p. 327). While most government critics have advocated different systems of land ownership based on economic considerations, they have glossed over the political and social challenges of these alternatives.

This section examines the debate on land and agriculture, identifying three reforms which proponents claim would address the failings of government policy: those that broadly support the government's focus on smallholder agriculture, although proposing a greater role for the private sector; those that argue for land privatisation; and those that propose communal ownership. These alternatives are assessed according to the principal components of the framework, namely:

the role of state social policy; the system of land tenure; the class basis of agrarian production; and the linkages between agriculture and other sectors of the economy.

State ownership, implemented better

The first group of critics shares the EPRDF's focus on smallholder agriculture and its potential to contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction. In doing so, they do not regard state ownership and the current distribution of land as unsurpassable obstacles to agricultural growth, and in some cases consider the threat of displacement resulting from privatisation to be very real. At least implicitly, therefore, these researchers share the class focus of ADLI and acknowledge the role of the land policy in protecting smallholders. Most of these commentators nevertheless criticise the implementation of government policy, frequently urging renewed attempts to intensify smallholder production through an expanded role for the private sector.

For example, many researchers have focused on the inability of the state-dominated agricultural input system to increase supply, with most concluding that the inefficiency of state organisations operating under monopolistic conditions constitutes a key cause of supply problems. As such, they advocate a greater role for the private sector in the production and distribution of fertiliser and improved seeds (Dawit Alemu 2010, Spielman *et al.* 2010, 2011). In addition, some researchers have focused on promoting demand for inputs. Dercon and Christiaensen (2011), for example, conclude that production risks are a major reason why farmers are reluctant to invest in improved inputs, highlighting the importance of access to micro-insurance to increase productivity. Mellor and Dorosh (2010) anticipate that roughly 48 per cent of farmers have access to the agricultural inputs required to sustain the adoption of improved inputs. They propose that increasing input availability and ensuring adoption by these farmers will raise agricultural productivity, marketable surplus and farmers' income, creating demand for off-farm activities and thereby providing employment for those with insufficient land.

Many of the proposals envisage a greater role for the private sector and markets in the production and distribution of agricultural inputs, and implicitly a corresponding reduction in state power. Nevertheless, in maintaining key policies such as land ownership and the PSNP, they will not fundamentally challenge the government's dominance over a dependent society. However, given the strength of the EPRDF's opposition to land reform, working towards incremental change within the system of state ownership is perhaps the most pragmatic position.

Land privatisation

A number of Ethiopian economists propose land privatisation as a solution to present problems. The arguments put forward closely follow the neo-liberal approach to property rights, emphasising the economic role of land, while dismissing the potential for negative social impacts. Berhanu (2004, 2005) and Dessalegn Rahmato, in his extensive work, most clearly articulate this position. They believe that privatisation will unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of smallholders, since the tenure security of private property will encourage long-term investment and provide a means of accessing credit through mortgaging land, while a land market would constitute an efficient means of consolidating existing sub-economic landholdings into optimal units. Moreover, proponents of privatisation argue that state ownership has resulted in 'equality under

poverty' and that consequently some increase in inequality is not only acceptable but also desirable (Dessalegn Rahmato 2003, p. 9).

Proponents of privatisation dismiss government concerns regarding the negative social consequences of privatisation. Several point to surveys which asked respondents whether they would sell their land, if permitted to do so (respondent FO2, Berhanu Nega *et al.* 2002, Yeraswork Admassie *et al.* 2003, Berhanu Abegaz 2004). That the majority of respondents replied that they would not sell their land under any circumstances is taken as evidence that the government's fears are unfounded. Nevertheless, they claim that enabling farmers with 'starvation plots' to sell, would allow them to exit agriculture with some capital to establish themselves in another sector (Samuel Gebreselassie 2006). For the minority of displaced farmers, Berhanu suggests that temporary, targeted cash- and food-for-work schemes, along the lines of the PSNP, may be required until such time as there are sufficient off-farm employment opportunities for the labour force 'released' from agriculture (Berhanu Abegaz 2004, p. 337). For the most part, advocates of privatisation focus on the efficiency of private property and expected productivity increases in agriculture, with few explicitly considering the role of the agriculture sector within the economy. The apparent assumption is that Ethiopia would follow the classical path of industrialisation in England in the nineteenth century, with industrialisation following on from agricultural productivity increases and industrial employment absorbing surplus labour displaced from agriculture.

There are numerous problems with the arguments put forward by proponents of privatisation. The first regards the assumption that smallholders would only sell their land out of choice. Smallholders throughout the world have been understandably reluctant to part with their land due to the loss of security involved in losing access to a key means of subsistence. The findings of Berhanu *et al.* (2002) regarding the preference of peasants to retain their land are therefore nothing exceptional. However, in other urbanised countries, rather than a voluntary process of relocation, peasant displacement has been a violent act resulting from coercion by state or market forces (Moore, Jr. 1967, Scott 1976, Tilly 1992, Polanyi 2001). Indeed, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that 'deregulated land markets almost always lead to re-concentration of land ownership ... Sooner or later, such holdings will be hit by a shock and the owners will have to sell out to survive' (Chang 2009, p. 487, Bernstein 2010). In Ethiopia, agriculture is inherently unpredictable given the limited irrigation and unreliable rainfall. The result is that even in relatively affluent sites, like Turufe, periodic droughts result in severe shocks that would otherwise lead to distress sales. Furthermore, land markets and commercial agriculture expose smallholders to economic competition. Regardless of debates regarding the productivity per hectare of different farm sizes, there are economies of scale related to credit and mechanisation in agricultural production that frequently make it difficult for smallholders to compete economically with large-scale operations (De Schutter 2011).

Second, the rush for farmland resulting from international crises of food, finance, energy and environment has raised the stakes of the land question. When many of the proponents of privatisation outlined their arguments, prior to this wave of land transactions, they envisaged a process of differentiation within the peasantry and the emergence of medium-scale farmers with commercially oriented farms. In the contemporary context, there is enormous demand for agricultural land from foreign and domestic investors whose resources dwarf those of even

relatively wealthy smallholders. In such circumstances, privatisation could well result in large-scale land enclosures and peasant displacement in highland areas. Consequently, despite flaws in ADLI, the fear of mass displacement resulting from privatisation cannot be simply dismissed.

Third, like the EPRDF, many proponents of privatisation consider industrialisation and urban employment to be the ultimate solutions to the land shortage. Consequently, social policy requirements are limited to safety nets that provide temporary protection during the transition from peasant displacement to industrial employment. This perspective, like ADLI, ignores the challenges neo-liberal globalisation presents to developing countries both in terms of establishing internationally competitive industry and creating employment. The manufacturing sector in contemporary developing countries is exposed to intense international competition as a result of structural adjustment reforms, and bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. This has led some to question whether industrialisation is a path open to all (Heintz 2009). Meanwhile, where manufacturing does prosper, research shows that increased global competition is driving productivity increases with the result that production is far more capital-intensive and less labour-intensive than was the case for the early industrialising countries (Byres 2003, Bernstein 2004, Kapsos 2005, Ghosh 2008, Heintz 2009, UNRISD 2010). As a consequence, industrialisation may not be able to absorb surplus labour, as hoped. Yet, while ADLI attempts to slow the pace of urban migration until employment opportunities are available, land privatisation would enable a rapid transition. Consequently, the likelihood is that rather than requiring temporary safety nets during a relatively short period, privatisation would lead to growth of urban slums and the informal sector, presenting long-term and widespread social policy requirements.

Finally, some proponents of privatisation highlight the role of state ownership in securing government power over the peasantry and claim that privatisation would release the peasantry from government political control (respondent FO2, Berhanu Abegaz 2004). Indeed, Dessalegn claims that '[r]obust property rights create the conditions for an assertive peasantry' (Dessalegn Rahmato 2009, p. 262), since independence from the state facilitates freedom of association. This is, nevertheless, a major over-simplification. Freedom from state intervention does not translate directly into the freedom to act collectively. Just because privatisation frees individuals, to a degree, from state coercion, does not mean that they are free from coercion by market forces. Indeed, should privatisation lead to displacement and destitution, it may even damage their freedom to act collectively in pursuit of their objectives. Although past research has shown a strong correlation between capitalism and liberal democracy (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992), identification of a causal link between private property and democratisation is highly questionable. There is no 'simple mutual reinforcement between a free market for goods and services [or, indeed, labour and land] and a market for political outcomes' (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992, p. 7). While private property is compatible with liberal democracy, it does not cause it. Instead, 'capitalism is associated with democracy because it transforms the class structure, strengthening the working and middle classes ... it was not the capitalist market nor capitalists as the new dominant force, but rather the contradictions of capitalism that advanced the cause of democracy' (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992, p. 7).

Communal ownership

A final group of researchers suggest communal tenure as an alternative to privatisation and state ownership. Communal ownership resonates with ethnic federalism, placing group resources under group administration. However, communal ownership is the least clearly articulated of the approaches to land tenure, and consequently its benefits and drawbacks are less clear. Under communal tenure, rather than being the property of the state or individuals, land is owned collectively by the community. Land is administered by some form of local organisation, distinct from the government, such as elders, lineage or clan, with community residents allocated usufruct rights (Mamo Hebo 2006). The expectation is that communal ownership could therefore provide a similar role to state ownership in protecting farmers from market forces, since land transactions would be restricted. However, since land would be communally administered, farmers would be insulated from state interference (Mamo Hebo 2006) and they would have the tenure security required for investment (Dessalegn Rahmato 1994).

In the absence of a clearly articulated discussion of how communal tenure would function in practice in Ethiopia, this approach would appear to suffer from even more fundamental problems than privatisation. Discussions of communal tenure are not linked to any particular development strategy and are based on an idealised view of ‘traditional’ community life. Notably, communal tenure provides no obvious solution to the key problem with state ownership—the land shortage (Platteau 2005). Indeed, communal tenure would remove the one option currently available to the government to relieve pressure on the land—resettlement—since allocation of land to settlers would be dependent on acceptance by the host community. According to Dessalegn, communal tenure would improve tenure security and thereby promote investment. Nevertheless, based on my fieldwork and past studies, land registration has gone some way to enhancing subjective tenure security under state ownership (Deininger and Jin 2006). Certainly, few respondents felt that land redistribution was likely in the future. The sub-economic holdings of many farmers would appear to be a far more significant problem and one which communal tenure does nothing to address.

Communal tenure would constitute the devolution of power from the state to the community, reducing state control over the peasantry. In the past and present, communal tenure in Ethiopia has existed primarily in areas beyond effective state control and, consequently, it is not clear how to reconcile state authority with communal administration. Indeed, as demonstrated in previous chapters, rather than a shift to communal tenure, the opposite process is occurring at present with the promotion of investment in lowland areas, through which *de facto* communal ownership is giving way to state administration of investment leases. Nevertheless, drawing on findings from a study in Arssi, Oromiya, it has been proposed that communal tenure would enjoy greater legitimacy among the people, since elders are considered fairer and less corrupt than the state, and would create less conflict, since the focus of dispute resolution is on reconciliation rather than punishment (Mamo Hebo 2006).

While communal tenure might reduce potential for state manipulation, community administration is idealised by its proponents who ignore the discrimination that pervades Ethiopian society. First, despite many failings of government policy, the case studies of Turufe and Geblen showed that the government has been instrumental in the limited advances in women’s

land rights, through changes in both formal and informal laws. In comparison, Ethiopian society remains patriarchal and the devolution of land administration to community organisations would raise the likelihood of greater gender inequality in land tenure (see Whitehead and Tsikata 2003). Second, proponents ignore the multi-ethnic nature of many communities and the existing inter-ethnic tensions regarding land. Communal administration clearly has the potential to exacerbate divisions between ‘indigenous’ groups and outsiders, especially in the context of land shortages. Certainly in Turufe, where the state currently stands as a barrier to further eviction of minorities, devolution of land administration to elders, without close state control, would be likely to inflame ethnic tensions. Finally, there are important practical problems, including the nature of the communal organisation, which would administer the land. In most of Ethiopia, the obvious candidates—customary organisations such as *gadaa* in Oromiya—have been either destroyed or co-opted by past or present governments. Communal tenure would therefore require the creation of new communal organisations, which would not automatically enjoy the legitimacy that Mamo claims.

Ways out of the impasse – sources of political transformation

Regardless of the socioeconomic benefits of the alternatives to state ownership, for the government to transform land tenure and to give up the political control that it represents would require a change in the balance of power upon which existing policy is based. Policy change is only likely when EPRDF leaders believe reform is in their interests or when they are forced to make changes. Existing debates on land, however, largely ignore the political cleavages in Ethiopian society and proponents of alternative policies fail to suggest any political group, which might mobilise for the changes that they advocate. This section considers possible sources of transformation.

In August 2012, the Ethiopian government announced the death of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. The party moved swiftly to confirm former Deputy Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, who Meles was widely rumoured to be grooming to take over, as the new Prime Minister. While at the time of writing it is far too early to assess the ramifications of these developments, two symbolic changes are immediately evident. First, Hailemariam is a Wolayita, a small ethnic group in SNNPR, and a protestant. Although his authority within the party will no doubt be tested in the future, his appointment nevertheless marks a break from the TPLF supremacy within the EPRDF and the historic domination of Ethiopian politics by Orthodox Christian Amhara and Tigrawi. Second, following the split in the TPLF in 2001, Meles was among the last of the senior party members whose ideas of political mobilisation were shaped during the TPLF’s peasant insurrection. His death therefore brings to the forefront a new generation of EPRDF politicians, including Hailemariam, who may be less fixated on the peasantry as the party’s political base. Although Hailemariam has affirmed his commitment to existing EPRDF policies, it is nevertheless possible that he may be more open to change in social and agricultural policies.

As a result of the vehemence with which past donor attempts to influence land policy were met, for those donors actively engaged in the agricultural sector, working within the constraints of state ownership has become their *de facto* position. While most donors currently ignore the land

issue, a number privately support further liberalisation (respondent FD3). While the World Bank no longer advocates privatisation, its preference for individual tenure and rental markets certainly comes close to that of the neo-liberal approach (Deininger and Binswanger 1999). Nevertheless, the previous discussion regarding the role of donors in the political economy of social policy suggests that Ethiopia's foreign donors are unlikely to emerge as a source of transformative change, given the geo-political and humanitarian incentives to continue supporting the EPRDF.

Many Ethiopian academics and a number of political parties have for some time advocated privatisation. In particular, the CUD, which emerged as a major force at the 2005 elections, and its successor, the Unity for Justice and Democracy (UJD), both favour privatisation. The party, which also objects to the ethnic federal system, draws support primarily, though not exclusively, from urban areas and Amhara region (Arriola 2008, Tronvoll 2009). Indeed, this urban constituency, many of whom are dissatisfied with the lack of employment opportunities and lack of government policy to address their problems, is perhaps the most likely source of significant political challenge to the government. Though small as a proportion of the total population, the numbers of these urban disenchanted are quite large and concentrated in Addis Ababa and a few major cities.

Nevertheless, rather than constituting a unified class with common interests or self-identification, they actually come from a broad range of social strata and have diverse interests. They range from educated graduates who want well remunerated employment that matches their qualifications, to recent migrants from rural areas who, without land, had nothing to gain from staying in the countryside. CUD support was based on a variety of issues or merely opposition to the EPRDF. While some wealthy supporters may have favoured economic liberalisation, including land privatisation, many urban poor are likely to favour increased social protection and state intervention regarding rocketing food prices. Still others voted for the CUD primarily as a protest against ethnic federalism and the simplifications it imposes on complex identities (Tronvoll 2009). The violent crackdowns against opposition supporters in 2005 and the threat of violence against such groups in the future have for the time being been sufficient to prevent further demonstrations. Nevertheless, while the government has used the land policy and the PSNP to slow the rate of urban migration, it has not stopped it. The landless and those without a stake in agriculture continue to migrate to cities and as a result the urban poor continue to grow rapidly in size and potential influence. While the CUD promised to privatise land if it won the 2005 elections, any transformation resulting from future urban popular protests would have an uncertain outcome.

For the time being, the majority of smallholders do seem to support state ownership. The attitude of the rural population is accurately described as 'pragmatic ... obedience' to the EPRDF, rather than whole-hearted support for it (Clapham 2009, p. 184). In the absence of viable alternatives, the extent of the dependence of the peasantry on the state is such that there is little to gain from political opposition (Lefort 2007, Tronvoll 2011). Nevertheless, were a coherent alternative to the EPRDF to present itself, this obedience could evaporate relatively quickly and the peasantry could, in coalition with other groups, become a force for transformation.

Land privatisation would benefit foreign and domestic agricultural investors, since it would offer a mechanism by which they could access the land with the most economic potential in highland areas where infrastructure is already relatively good. Similar access could also be obtained through an increase in state-administered leases and smallholder displacement. Consequently, should investment projects succeed in generating foreign exchange, investors could become very influential regarding government policymaking in the agricultural sector and, in particular, in relation to land. For the time being, either outcome seems unlikely since the investment sector remains relatively small and government priorities are dominated by the dangers of smallholder displacement. Nonetheless, in the future this balance of interests could change.

Despite the resonance of communal tenure with ethno-nationalist discourse, it is not clear that any ethnic movements or parties actually support its adoption. Most ethnic-based parties, including the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) coalition which achieved some important successes at the 2005 elections and drew support primarily from rural Oromiya and SNNPR (Arriola 2008), favour state land ownership (respondent FO1). The UEDF has not, however, articulated a strategy for raising agricultural productivity or a vision for the role of agriculture in the process of development. Rather, expectations of raising agricultural productivity seem to rest solely on the assumption that the UEDF can implement policies better than the EPRDF.

Finally, the outcome of any successful challenge by an armed insurrection, most likely along ethnic lines, would be far from certain. The most prominent organisations are the OLF and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) in Somali region. However, at present the prospects of either forming a serious challenge to the EPRDF seem remote. A combination of ethnic federalism, which has co-opted key segments of society and tied economic success to membership of the EPRDF's ethnic party, and state coercion, which allows little room for mobilisation outside the party, has left the OLF weak, divided and capable only of sporadic attacks (Markakis 2011). Fighting between the ONLF and the Ethiopian army in Somali region has been more sustained. However, at present there is little to suggest that the conflict might grow beyond the region.

Conclusions

The preceding analysis has highlighted the political importance of the peasantry to the government as the key feature of the government's social policy strategy and the significance of the land question to political development in Ethiopia. Land policy has been used to prevent the emergence of political opposition to the EPRDF either through the accumulation of land by powerful landholders or the growth of poor and disenchanted groups in urban areas through smallholder displacement. Similarly, the implications of ethnic federalism for land administration have been ignored in favour of a class-based policy due to the potential danger of ethnic politicisation. Nonetheless, these policies result in growing land shortages, which undermine the protective role of the land policy, lead to a growing problem of food insecurity, and limit growth in agricultural productivity. These failing policies towards the smallholder sector have been maintained based on the donor funded PSNP, which addresses many of the symptoms of food insecurity, but, in the context of the land policy, offers little possibility of resolving the problem.

Though an important departure from past policy, the government's promotion of large-scale agricultural investment does not challenge this status quo. Instead, the promotion of export-oriented investments is an attempt to overcome the failings of the smallholder sector, without bringing fundamental change to the existing system of production in the highlands. In order to achieve this balance, investment is targeted to lowland areas occupied by politically marginal populations practicing pastoralism and shifting cultivation. These changes have necessitated institutional reform, with the federal government re-centralising investment administration, taking powers away from the regional administrations, which are supposed to represent ethnic interests. The changes are contrary to the logic of ethnic federalism, prioritising the state-defined national interest over those of affected groups and individuals.

The analysis also refutes the claims of revolutionary democracy to provide an effective means of representation and participation in an agrarian economy as an alternative to liberal democracy. The diversity of systems of production and the land shortage undermine the EPRDF's claims that the rural population has common class interests. Even with respect to the smallholders who are supposedly the central concern of government policy, there is little opportunity for meaningful participation, given the dominance of top-down policy imposed on communities with little consideration for local realities. Furthermore, despite the revolutionary democratic claim to mobilise ethnic groups from within, in practice the EPRDF has created a new political elite in several regions where it did not previously have a strong base. Owing their power to the EPRDF rather than the ethnic group, which they are supposed to represent, these parties enjoy little legitimacy.

Despite its social and economic failings, ADLI has been retained as a means of controlling sources of potential opposition. As a result there is considerable dissatisfaction with the EPRDF in Ethiopia. Nevertheless, this opposition—both political parties and societal interests—is fragmented along ethnic and class lines and remains deeply divided about the most fundamental issues, continuing debates ongoing since the 1960s about the role of ethnicity and the unity of Ethiopia. As such, there is comparatively little meaningful debate about social and economic objectives and the policies required to achieve them.

The negative experiences of elections in 2005 and 2010 suggest that there is little chance that electoral processes will drive political transformation and land reform. Rather, the most likely sources of transformation are either popular urban protests forcing the EPRDF from power or incremental policy change instigated by a new generation of EPRDF leaders who have taken the reins following Meles Zenawi's recent death.

11

Conclusions

The first objective of this concluding chapter is to summarise the findings of the thesis with respect to the three research questions. First, the introduction asked, *how are different discourses on social policy reflected in policy choices made by senior policymakers?*

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front's (EPRDF) development strategy, which draws inspiration from the East Asian developmental states, aims at a state-managed transition from an agrarian to an urban, industrial economy. To bring about this transition, Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) highlights the importance of labour-intensive agriculture, supported by agricultural technologies that complement but do not replace labour, to raise agricultural productivity. The government aims to use the resulting agricultural surplus to support industrial expansion through forward linkages from agricultural to industry—in particular the supply of cheap wage foods and industrial inputs—and backward linkages—with the agricultural sector providing a market for domestically manufactured agricultural inputs and consumption goods.

Analysis of government policy statements identified a number of social policy discourses embedded in this development strategy, which are used to legitimate far-reaching state intervention to pursue social objectives. Despite the dominance of the market-based poverty reduction discourse in official policy documents, which is reassuringly familiar to donor audiences, Ethiopian social policy is dominated by several discourses that go well beyond the poverty reduction approach's narrow focus on basic social services and targeted social protection. Notably, productivist, peasant security and class homogeneity discourses, which integrate social and economic objectives and are universal in ambition, are used to justify state land ownership and the maintenance of a homogeneous peasant class, providing protection against market forces and promoting equality. Another key role for social policy is to control the process of urban migration, directing labour to what the government considers to be the most productive activities and limiting the flow of people to the cities until industrialisation has created sufficient jobs, in the interests of political and social stability. The envisaged result is a state-managed process of urbanisation and industrialisation, with industrial expansion going hand-in-hand with the gradual reduction of restrictions on mobility.

In addition to these class-based social policy discourses, an ethnic egalitarian discourse draws on a particular interpretation of Ethiopian history, highlighting past ethnic inequalities to justify ethnic self-administration. This ethnic egalitarian discourse, which underlies Ethiopia's ethnic federal project, also implies variation between the land rights of 'indigenous' and 'outsider' residents of ethnic regions, in contrast with the class-based discourses on land.

The class homogeneity and ethnic egalitarian discourses also have important implications for political representation and state-society relations. In particular, the ERPDF's revolutionary democratic approach contends that the land policy, by maintaining a 'homogeneous' class of peasant producers with common needs and interests, obviates the need for political pluralism. Instead, the EPRDF, the vanguard party, is responsible for mobilising and leading the peasantry. While there is no need for plural representation along class lines, recognition of the multi-ethnic nature of Ethiopia, necessitates ethnic-based parties which mobilise their populations 'from within' with leaders from their own ethnic group and in their own language.

As such social policy and state-society relations are dominated by land tenure, and the economic, social and political implications of different forms of land ownership. The implementation of the land policy and the resolution of tensions between social policy discourses in practice have therefore constituted the central focus of this thesis. To that end, the introduction asked, *how are these social policy discourses reflected in policy implementation and what impact do these policies have on different types of people?*

Achievement of ADLI's ambitious social and economic objectives requires the rapid adoption of productivity-enhancing technology to raise productivity and produce a large agricultural surplus to contribute to industrialisation. Industrial growth is not just an important economic objective but also a vital complement to the social policy strategy, given that industry creates employment, facilitating a reduction in population pressure on farmland and ensuring the continuing profitability of the adoption of agricultural technologies.

However, the Ethiopian agricultural sector illustrates the problems that result when the delicate balance between agricultural and industrial growth is not achieved. The government has been unable to increase the supply and use of fertiliser, improved seeds and irrigation during the 20 years of ADLI's implementation. As a result, low productivity agriculture generates a limited agricultural surplus, insufficient to contribute to the rapid growth of other economic sectors. In the absence of rapid industrial and service sector employment growth, urban demand has remained weak, further diminishing incentives for farmers to invest in improved production. These economic failings have undermined the government's social policy objectives. In particular, population growth, urban stagnation and government policies designed to constrain urban migration have resulted in growing land shortages. Though common across the country, population growth and pressure on land manifest themselves in different ways based on the operation of contingent processes in contrasting local contexts. Consequently, the tensions between social policy discourses are resolved in distinct ways, leading to differentiation in state social policy provision along class, gender, age and ethnic lines, contrary to the universal pretensions of social policy discourse.

In Turufe Kechema, despite the high potential of agricultural production, the government has been unable to ensure widespread use of yield enhancing technologies. This failing is the result of

supply problems, with improved seeds in short supply, and limited demand, with many farmers lacking adequate land to sustain investment in purchased inputs and volatile output markets reducing production incentives. Although the area is not classified as food insecure, land shortages mean that for many, landholdings are sufficient to provide only partial subsistence, while the moratorium on land redistribution has meant growing inter-generational divisions between older landholders and younger landless populations. Furthermore, despite some government progress in promoting women's land rights, in practice the land policy discriminates against women given the expectation that only men plough land, leaving women dependent on men to access an agricultural livelihood. Finally, the rhetoric of ethnic federalism has exacerbated pre-existing ethnic tensions, while the state's response to ethnic conflict has failed to protect minority land rights, resulting in variation in protection between majority and minority ethnic groups.

Geblen, meanwhile, represents a particularly extreme case given the problematic nature of agricultural production, which is constrained by both land shortages and unreliable rainfall. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), meanwhile, has been incorporated into the existing system of production to the extent that the programme constitutes the main income for most of the community. As such, the PSNP enables the continuation of failing government policies towards the smallholder sector. Together, the PSNP and the land policy provide a minimal form of security for most landholders at the cost of dependence on the state. However, in the context of a shortage of urban employment opportunities, this minimal security represents a barrier to urban migration, while the PSNP fails to constitute part of a transformative agenda to address food insecurity.

While land shortages are less severe in Korodegaga than in most parts of the country, unreliable rains place great importance on the limited irrigable land. Nevertheless, the egalitarian distribution of irrigated land and the necessary prioritisation of short-term security by farmers mean that most farmers grow maize for subsistence on irrigated land rather than high value cash crops. Consequently, in the frequent drought years these individual plots are insufficient to generate a surplus for sale, endangering future irrigated production which is reliant on purchased fuel to power diesel motors.

The result, therefore, is that, rather than being complementary as envisaged, ADLI's productive, protective and egalitarian objectives are increasingly in tension with one another. Nevertheless, the EPRDF continues to regard peasant displacement and resultant urban migration as posing the most dangerous threats to its political authority. As a consequence, reform to land tenure within the smallholder sector has been limited, while social policy implementation remains dominated by the peasant security and class homogeneity discourses, which provide a form of minimal, dependent security to smallholders. The need to address the problems in the agricultural sector has prompted policy changes that have taken advantage of recent demand from foreign and domestic investors for farmland to produce food and bio-fuel feed crops. The result is a development strategy, which places less emphasis on the internal production linkages envisaged in ADLI and increasingly prioritises export-oriented agricultural investments in order to increase foreign exchange earnings.

The analysis shows that the promotion of agricultural investment has resulted in only limited changes in densely-populated smallholder areas, primarily where investment projects avoid displacement through outgrower schemes, as in Waqqee Xiyyoo and Hawi Gudina; by leasing communal land, as in Korodegaga and Turufe; or where flower farms use labour-intensive production techniques. However, the main thrust of the government's investment policy has been the promotion of large-scale agricultural investment in lowland areas populated by politically marginal ethnic groups whose main livelihoods include pastoralism and shifting cultivation. Indeed, a marginal lands narrative has questioned the existing land use of these groups to justify the lease of land to investors. As such, agricultural investment delineates an additional boundary to the security provided by the land policy, effectively excluding pastoralists and shifting cultivators from the protection provided to settled smallholders. This process of spatially differentiated agrarian transformation builds on past patterns of exploitation of marginal ethnic groups by the Ethiopian state, undermining the ethnic federal system and leading to an emerging dualism in Ethiopian agriculture.

The final research question asked, *what are the implications of this social policy strategy for state-society relations?* The EPRDF claims that its revolutionary democracy represents the homogeneous class interests of 'the peasantry'. However, the preceding analysis has shown that population growth, land shortages, livelihood diversity and the promotion of agricultural investment means that rural Ethiopians include settled smallholders, landless populations, sharecroppers, agricultural wage labourers, pastoralists and shifting cultivators. These diverse groups have very different interests and consequently require plural representation. In practice, however, the government makes far-reaching decisions concerning the distribution of factors of production, including labour, with little regard for individual or group rights.

Even settled smallholders, in theory the EPRDF's main constituency, in practice have little influence over top-down, paternalistic government policymaking. Instead, government policy is used to maintain the complete dependence of smallholders on state organisations for access to the inputs required for their livelihoods including land, seeds, fertiliser, credit and food aid, in the interests of social and political control. In addition, while the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) began as a peasant movement and still enjoys substantial support in Tigray, most of the other ethnic parties that make up the EPRDF were established from above, with co-opted political elites accountable to the EPRDF for their power, rather than their own populations. Thus far, these parties have struggled to enhance their legitimacy and remain dependent on the federal government. Meanwhile, the promotion of investment has exposed the limited powers of administrations in peripheral regions, as the federal government has centralised control over vast swathes of land, dismissing the existing land uses of local groups and leading to inequality between ethnic administrations. This degree of ethnic inequality is incompatible with the most basic political rights.

Based on these findings, the thesis makes a number of empirical contributions to the literature on social policy and agrarian change in Ethiopia. In particular, it constitutes the first piece of research to analyse the PSNP in the context of the agricultural system of production in which it operates and the political economy of government policy towards the smallholder sector. As a result, the thesis concludes that the PSNP has, in certain cases, been used to support the government's failing policies towards the smallholder sector, providing, along with the land policy, a means of

limiting the flow of urban migration in the interests of social and political stability. Furthermore, the study is the first piece of research to bring empirical data to bear on an analysis of the 'land grab' in Ethiopia. The thesis situates these new agricultural investment trends with respect to the government's evolving agricultural development strategy, changing patterns of land use and the politics of ethnic federalism.

Bevan (2006), in the only other study to have attempted a broadly comparable, albeit much shorter, piece of research, does not include land tenure in her analysis of Ethiopian social policy. The discourse analytical approach pursued in this thesis argued that social policy is socially constructed in specific national-historical contexts and, in doing so, opened up the analysis to consider policies other than those conventionally considered 'social' policy in industrialised countries. As a result, the thesis' findings contrast with Bevan's (2006) conclusion that the bulk of society relies primarily on informal social provision, with state provision being limited to patchy and inadequate education, health and food aid. In particular, this thesis concludes that the peasantry is a central concern of state social policy and that the land policy's social objectives constitute a central feature of rural livelihoods. In many respects, the two studies come to similar conclusions regarding social outcomes for the highland rural population. The analysis also supports Bevan's findings regarding the ambiguous protection provided to pastoralists in border regions and the state's complicity in the generation of insecurity in border areas. However, the main difference regards state-society relations and the dependence of smallholders on the state that results from implementation of the land as a social policy.

Social policy and structural transformation

Research on the process of structural transformation in the early industrialising countries suggests that there are relatively few positive lessons for developing countries in terms of equality, security and political rights to be learnt from the 'classical' model of transformation in England, 'capitalism from above' in Prussia or the communist path in the Soviet Union. Indeed, structural transformation in those countries was characterised by violence and instability, rising inequality, exploitation, widespread insecurity and political exclusion of large sections of the population (Moore, Jr. 1967, Byres 1991, 2009, Polanyi 2001). Instead, the Ethiopian government has drawn inspiration from the East Asian developmental states.

Comparison between the existing literature on those countries and the preceding analysis highlights a number of areas where the implementation of the EPRDF's strategy diverges from the East Asian experience. First, widespread use of improved inputs is widely credited with significant agricultural productivity increases in East Asia. States in Japan, Korea and Taiwan invested heavily in large-scale irrigation (Koo 1971, Kikuchi and Hayami 1978, Kihl and Bark 1981, Kay 2002, Karshenas 2004), expanding access to small-scale producers who would have been unable to develop water resources themselves. As a result, estimates suggest that more than 60 per cent of farmland was irrigated in Taiwan by 1940 (Koo 1971), while in 1971, 66 per cent of Japanese households, 50 per cent in Taiwan and 45 per cent in Korea had access to irrigation (Oshima 1987, p. 157). This state investment enabled farmers to make the most of improved seeds and fertilisers supplied by the government, lowered the risks of investment in purchased inputs (Kikuchi and

Hayami 1978) and reduced pressure on farmland since irrigation enabled farmers to produce several crops per year (Karshenas 2004).

In the 1950s, the Korean government made the development of domestic fertiliser production a major objective with the result that the country not only became self-sufficient but also began exporting fertiliser in the 1970s (Burmeister 1990). The state played a similar role in Taiwan (Chang 2009). Furthermore, state investment in context-specific agricultural research on new seed varieties and state-subsidised agricultural credit institutions in Korea and Taiwan greatly expanded access to inputs (Kay 2002, Chang 2009). Past research has highlighted the enormous importance to those countries of US aid, provided relatively free of conditions in the very different context of Cold War politics. US aid was used by those states to invest in agricultural technology, economic infrastructure and the development of basic industry (Mao and Schive 1995, Bräutigam 2000, Ku 2007, Wade 2009), complementing productivist social policies.

In contrast, the Ethiopian government has been constrained by the shifting priorities of foreign donors, who over the last twenty years have cut spending on industry and agriculture in line with their neo-liberal development model. Partly as a result, the government has been unable to increase the availability and use of improved seed varieties, fertiliser or irrigation, and has failed to establish any domestic fertiliser production.

The second issue concerns farmers' incentives to invest in improved production. The challenge for the state is how to satisfy the competing demands of industry and agriculture, for on the one hand industrialisation requires a reliable supply of cheap food to reduce living costs for industrial workers and limit industrial wages, while on the other hand, high food prices offer incentives for farmers to invest in new technologies and raise productivity (Dorward *et al.* 2006, Kay 2009). The experience of Korea and Taiwan is noteworthy since incentives for farmers to adopt new technologies remained, despite adverse terms of trade for the agricultural sector resulting from state surplus extraction. According to Karshenas (1996), this success can be attributed to the continuous stream of new state-supplied seed varieties and improved production techniques. Due to this continual innovation, he argues, productivity increases were such that incentives remained, despite state surplus extraction. This may well constitute a partial explanation. However, the close control of production methods and coercion by Korean and Taiwanese state organisations also contributed to the continuous adoption of new technologies (Kay 2002), while the importance of state price stabilisation measures has also been recognised as an important factor affecting the adoption of new technologies (Chang 2009).

In Ethiopia the state has, as yet, been unable to ensure that output markets provide sufficient incentives for many farmers to invest in increased production. Segmented markets and the relatively small urban population means that at times there has been insufficient demand for increased agricultural production, resulting in the collapse of output prices and considerable uncertainty for farmers regarding the returns to their investments (Dercon and Vargas Hill 2009). This underscores the importance of growth in non-agricultural sectors and urban employment in order to support continuing growth in agricultural productivity (Karshenas 1996, Mellor 1998).

Indeed, in the East Asian developmental states, rapid growth in off-farm employment was essential in maintaining agricultural incentives, absorbing surplus labour from agriculture and reducing pressure on farmland (Amsden 1979, Byres 1991, Karshenas 1996, Chang 2009). In

Korea, the main employers were the *chaebol*—large-scale urban enterprises established with the help of the state (Amsden 1992), whereas industrialisation in Taiwan occurred initially through small firms in rural areas (Karshenas 2004). Without increased off-farm employment, agricultural production growth would have likely led to declining output prices and reduced incentives for innovation (Karshenas 1996). In addition, without fast rates of absorption of surplus labour, pressure on land resulting from rapid population growth would have resulted in declining productivity of agricultural labour (Karshenas 1996) and the creation of non-viable landholdings (Chang 2009). Structural changes in output and employment are therefore essential for sustained increases in agricultural productivity.

In Ethiopia, a central concern of ADLI has been to limit urban migration until industrial growth creates sufficient employment to absorb surplus labour. Although the restriction of migration is anticipated to be temporary, awaiting industrial employment creation, in the absence of urban employment, the state is prepared to use the land policy and the PSNP as indefinite barriers to migration, despite the limited opportunities for food insecure households to become self-sufficient through agricultural livelihoods. Not only does this exacerbate the land shortages, but as a result of low rates of migration, just 17 per cent of the population lives in urban areas, one of the smallest proportions in the world, translating into weak demand for agricultural production and limited incentives for farmers to raise production.

Consequently, while in itself state ownership is not necessarily a barrier to increased agricultural productivity,⁵⁰ particular features of the Ethiopian case—in particular, the failure to increase use of improved inputs and the shortage of off-farm employment—mean that not only does the land policy fall short of its objectives of providing security and equality, but—in the context of urban stagnation and population growth—the present distribution of land may also constitute a barrier to raising agricultural productivity. At present the creation of off-farm employment is considered primarily as an outcome of an ‘agriculture first’ development strategy. Nevertheless, based on the findings of this thesis, off-farm employment may actually be a pre-requisite for smallholder-based agricultural development, since a reduction in the pressure on land in highland areas is vital to any attempt to increase agricultural productivity.

ADLI attempts to re-create the approach of the East Asian developmental states, but, unlike those countries, to do so in a democratic manner (Meles Zenawi 2006). Implicitly, therefore, the government assumes that authoritarianism in East Asian was merely an optional extra, rather than an integral part of those countries’ economic success. Existing research on those countries suggests that this assumption is questionable and that close state control was actually a key feature in ensuring that agriculture made the required contribution to industrialisation. As concisely summarised by Byres in reference to South Korea and Taiwan,

‘It was an agrarian transition whose passage and sustaining have required a very powerful and repressive state. If, indeed, there is a paradigm here for other Asian [or other] countries to emulate, it is one whose political prerequisites and corollaries must be noted’ (Byres 1991, p. 58).

⁵⁰ State ownership of land was maintained in China throughout a period of rapid growth, increases in agricultural production and structural transformation.

Just as in Ethiopia, the class structure in post-land reform Korea and Taiwan brought smallholders into direct contact with a powerful state through local government and state-controlled farmers' associations. As such, smallholders found it extremely difficult to organise politically to oppose government policy (Moore 1984, Burmeister 1990). This lack of political power enabled the state to coerce farmers into changing production practices to achieve rapid transformation of agricultural production (Wade 1982, 1983, Moore 1984). Indeed, state coercion was used by both the Japanese colonial administration and post-colonial governments in Korea and Taiwan to force high yield seeds and technology on an 'often reluctant farming population' (Kay 2002, p. 1080, Amsden 1979, 1992, Burmeister 1990). In Korea, extension agents linked to the police and military pressured farmers to change seed varieties, made access to fertiliser conditional on adoption of new varieties and even destroyed old varieties that had been planted (Burmeister 1990). Similarly in Taiwan, police were used as extension agents, compelling peasants to adopt new technologies (Kay 2002).

In addition to raising agricultural productivity through the use of improved inputs, ADLI requires the extraction of the agricultural surplus to finance industrialisation. Extracting this surplus requires a repressive state and exploitation of the peasantry in order to make a contribution to national development (Byres 1991). In Taiwan this was achieved largely through the barter of fertiliser, on which peasants relied and which was controlled by a state monopoly, for rice on terms which were highly unfavourable to farmers (Amsden 1979, Kay 2002). In Korea, surplus extraction was achieved through the forced procurement of grain at below market prices and heavy land taxes (Byres 1991, Amsden 1992, Kay 2002). Indeed, the extent to which the agricultural sector was squeezed required the state to be able to ignore the demands of agriculturalists (Kay 2002). If agricultural producers did not have such little political power, the state would not have been able to favour the industrial sector to such a degree. As such, the political weakness of the peasantry in the East Asian model was a pre-requisite and therefore incompatible with any significant degree of political representation.

Recent waves of foreign agricultural investment in Ethiopia and other developing countries suggest a very different path of agrarian transformation to the East Asian model based on the promotion of large-scale, export-oriented capitalist agriculture. This modification to ADLI constitutes a step towards the neo-liberal mainstream for the agricultural sector. This mainstream highlights the importance of integrating producers into global markets through export-oriented agricultural production, enabling them to exploit their comparative advantage (World Bank 2008, Chang 2009, Bernstein 2010).

As discussed in chapter ten, recent research suggests that contemporary agrarian economies seeking to industrialise face a very different global context to today's industrialised countries at a broadly equivalent stage of transition (Bernstein 2004). Industrial production today is exposed to intense international competition, which not only presents considerable challenges to the establishment of industry, but also results in increasingly capital-intensive production techniques, which have much lower labour requirements, reducing the potential for industry to absorb the labour surplus. As a result, recent large-scale agricultural investment in Ethiopia and elsewhere stands out from other historical attempts to enclose land for commercial agriculture, for example in eighteenth century England, because the displacement of rural populations is not accompanied by any prospect of significant employment creation or the possibility of emigration, which

absorbed the surplus population in many early industrialising countries (White *et al.* 2012). The likely result is the separation of the agrarian question of capital from the agrarian question of labour (Bernstein 2004).

Studying social policy

Beyond empirical findings related to Ethiopian social policy and the process of structural transformation, the thesis also contributes to the literature on social policy in developing countries, and conceptual and methodological debates regarding social policy studies.

Social policy in developing countries

The thesis makes a number of contributions relevant to the study of social policy in developing countries. First, the empirical findings repeatedly underscore that social policy is embedded in state-society relations and, as such, is an inherently political field of analysis. This conclusion is widely accepted in social policy analysis in advanced economies (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990, Skocpol 1992, Pierson 1994, Huber and Stephens 2001). Nevertheless, within the development literature there has been a tendency to de-politicise ‘social’ and other areas of public policy, paying only selective attention to political issues, for example through the lens of ‘good governance’, which leads to a focus on technocratic decision making (Hickey 2008a, Leftwich 2008). The analysis also underscores the relevance of several theories used to explain social policy development in advanced economies to the study of Ethiopian social policy. In particular, divisions along class and ethnic lines and the impacts of globalisation have been extremely influential in the formulation and implementation of Ethiopian social policy, albeit in very different contexts and with contrasting outcomes compared to advanced economies. While the research has affirmed the importance of state organisations to policymaking, institutionalist approaches offer much less insight to Ethiopian social policy given the effective centralisation of power in the executive, and the ability and willingness of senior officials to override institutional divisions of power.

Second, while recent work has shown that different types of social policy intervention can contribute to the development of a social contract, whether of the liberal or social democratic variety (Hickey 2011), this thesis highlights that social policy can also be used by the state to reinforce patterns of domination and control over vulnerable groups in society. This is the case in Ethiopia with both the land policy and the PSNP, which draw on paternalistic arguments to enhance state control, securing compliance based on the prospect of government support. While social policy and democratic accountability can be mutually reinforcing processes, this positive feedback cannot be taken for granted.

Third, analysis of property rights is frequently undertaken solely from an economic perspective, leading to a focus on tenure security and economic efficiency. In part this derives from dominant economic theory, which highlights the importance of private property to economic growth. Nevertheless, land tenure also has vitally important implications for ‘social’ issues including social relations of production, in/equality and livelihood security. Indeed, land tenure is a particularly important issue in developing countries where a significant proportion of the population remains

reliant on agriculture, while changes to property rights and class structures have enduring implications for economic development, resource distribution and state-society relations (Moore, Jr. 1967). Emerging global agricultural investment trends and their potential for far-reaching transformation of property relations in Ethiopia and other developing countries underscore the importance of considering land from a social, as well as economic, perspective.

Finally, targeted and conditional cash transfer schemes have generated great interest in academic and practitioner circles in recent years. The PSNP, which combines cash and food transfers, is one of the largest and most prominent such examples. However, this thesis suggests the need for caution in proclaiming the benefits of these programmes. Cash transfers, in Ethiopia and elsewhere, have made important contributions, including the provision of regular and reliable support to the poor over the medium term. Nevertheless, most conditional, targeted cash transfers are narrow policy instruments, which have limited objectives and transfer relatively small amounts of money. As such, while they may constitute an advance in terms of addressing the symptoms of poverty, they rarely address the root causes of poverty and insecurity. These findings link to recent work which offers a more critical perspective on recent trends in social protection and cash transfers, highlighting the continued influence of social protection's origins in safety nets and humanitarian relief, and the frequent failure to challenge existing political and economic structures which are the source of insecurity, inequality, vulnerability and poverty (Devereux *et al.* 2011).

Conceptualising social policy and state-society relations

Chapter two argued that the domain of social policy is discursively created by state and societal actors in specific national-historical contexts with respect to: the roles of social policy; the relationship between economic and social policy; and the institutions responsible for social policy provision. Most of the existing social policy literature focuses on advanced industrial economies where there is considerable commonality between states, economic systems and, consequently, social policy instruments. State social policy in developing countries is formulated and implemented under very different social, political and economic conditions, and is, therefore, likely to include a range of additional policies beyond those usually considered in welfare states.

Both in advanced economies and developing countries, social policy constitutes a key aspect of state-society relations. Consequently social policy is inseparable from politics and has important implications for political development. This thesis has highlighted the links between the discourses used to justify social interventions and political ideologies which have important implications for the balance of individual and group rights, and freedoms (Hickey 2011). In addition, state social policy can transform patterns of dependence and cooperation, and the balance of interests along class, ethnic and gender lines, with vitally important implications for political development (Rueschemeyer *et al.* 1992, Stephens 2007).

However, while it is recognised that the domain of 'social' policy is socially constructed, social policy is more than the mere rhetoric of senior policymakers. State social policy involves not only the strategies and policies formulated by senior government officials within legitimising discourses, but also the practice of policy implementation, involving the adaptation of policy pronouncements to local realities. Though frequently neglected in policy analysis, it is the

decisions made by local administrators, which define the impacts of policy interventions on people's lives, differentiated by class, gender, age and ethnicity.

By linking a discursive approach to social policy to an analysis of the political economy of policymaking, this thesis has inevitably confronted the complex relationship between ideas and interests in policy change. Although the framework acknowledged the possibility that ideas can shape interests, the analysis focused primarily on the use of social policy discourses by political actors to further their political interests. Indeed, the analysis presented in chapter four showed the willingness of senior government policymakers to employ different and, frequently, contradictory social policy discourses in statements made to different audiences. These range from the populist 'peasant security' discourse, which presents the EPRDF as the protector of the peasantry, to a Marxist focus on class homogeneity and the potential divisiveness of a focus on ethnic autonomy. Meanwhile, the government's social policy strategy is selectively re-packaged for Ethiopia's foreign donors in terms of poverty reduction, market-led development and democratisation. This willingness to invoke contradictory ideas and adapt language to cater the government's message to different political constituencies suggests senior policymakers' pragmatic desire to use discourse to balance competing political interests, rather than a rigid commitment to a particular ideology.

In some other parts of the research, however, the value of focusing on interests rather than ideas when attempting to explain policy choices was less clear. Within the state bureaucracy there are certainly many officials who retain a commitment to Marxist ideology in the execution of their roles and who find much that resonates with these political beliefs in government social policy discourse. Furthermore, many of the interviews that I conducted with *wereda* and *kebele* officials revealed a limited knowledge of the fine details of government policy in particular areas. These officials were, however, frequently well-versed in the overarching government discourses and, in many cases, it is these ideas—regarding for example, paternalism in the land policy and PSNP, ethnic and gender equality, and legitimate uses of land—which guide their policy choices.

To a certain extent the choice of theoretical focus depends on the objectives of the research. No doubt a slightly different study examining the influence of ideas on policy processes in Ethiopia would generate important insights into the political economy of social policy. Such a study could usefully use Clapham's (2006) essay on Ethiopia's historical emulation of other countries' development models as a starting point.

A methodology for social policy analysis

This conceptual approach does, however, bring substantial methodological challenges, notably: how to conduct a systemic analysis of Ethiopian social policy, rather than an evaluation of an individual programme; how to link analysis of discourse and action; and how to relate analysis at macro, meso and micro levels, while balancing the competing priorities of breadth and depth.

In contrast to the impact evaluations common in social policy research, this thesis employs a case-based approach that attempts to analyse Ethiopian social policy as a whole. The methodology argues that rather than being reducible to individual variables, cases should be analysed as 'configurations of aspects' (Ragin 2000, p. 66), emphasising the links between policy initiatives and the socioeconomic context within which policy is implemented. This is not to deny

that impact evaluations are of value. Indeed, such evaluations can provide important information for policymakers designing policy instruments and enhance accountability by providing measurable outcomes against which to assess performance. Nevertheless, impact evaluations are limited in their scope, and it should be of considerable concern that they have become the main and, in cases, the only means of analysing social interventions. In contrast, this thesis has demonstrated the value of situating individual policies within the overall socioeconomic context within which they operate in order to enhance understanding of the broad impacts of the policies, their interaction with other policy interventions, as well as the political dynamics within which they are embedded.

One aspect of this case-based methodology, highlighted in chapter four, focused on analysis of social policy discourse. This analysis enabled the thesis to move beyond the standard social policies commonly found in advanced economies and to highlight the importance of land to Ethiopian social policy, as well as the centrality of the land question to state-society relations. A focus on discourse also provided a means of deepening the investigation beyond a technocratic policy analysis. This discourse analysis specified the arguments put forward by government policymakers to justify particular state social policies and remove others from the agenda, as well as highlighting the assumptions, which underpin their rationale for state intervention. These legitimising discourses are inseparable from the political interests of actors that advance them (Hastings 1998) and can, therefore, be traced to particular political philosophies based on differing visions of the relationship between the state, market, community and individual.

In contrast to constructivist approaches to discourse analysis, the realist case-based approach regards discourse as one aspect of social reality rather than an all-encompassing paradigm. As such, the case-based approach linked discourse analysis of policy statements to analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to shed light on the process of policy formulation and the adaptation of these pronouncements during implementation. In-depth implementation case studies linked analysis of the social role of the land policy to other government policy initiatives and the socioeconomic context of the research sites. While the study is concerned with the broader relevance of these case study findings, it explicitly recognises the limitations of generalisability and the impossibility of selecting representative case studies. Rather, the methodology comprises macro, meso and micro-analyses which link causal mechanisms in the case studies to macro-level processes. The analysis therefore focuses on mid-level explanations, identifying common patterns of interaction but acknowledging the contingent, context-specific nature of causal processes.

Despite these contributions, the methodology does suffer from weaknesses, and perhaps the most important of these is the difficulty of balancing depth and breadth of analysis. To some degree this is a problem faced by any study. At one extreme, detailed ethnographies involving an extended period of fieldwork in one site can offer great insights into the micro level political processes involved in policy implementation at the local level and the dynamics of state-society relations. The PhD thesis by Kaatja Segers (2009) provides an excellent example of this approach in Ethiopia. Frequently, however, it is difficult to judge the relevance of the findings of these studies beyond the specific fieldwork context, while they tend to offer little insight into macro policy formulation processes. At another extreme, research based on household surveys with representative samples can draw powerful conclusions regarding policy impacts, but offer little

insight into the political dynamics surrounding the process of policy implementation (e.g. Dercon and Daniel Ayalew 2007, Deininger *et al.* 2011).

By combining the detailed analysis of specific village level case studies with quantitative analysis of national and regional trends, this thesis aimed for a middle ground, incorporating strengths from each, while compensating for some of their weaknesses. With respect to the impact of policies, this methodological approach was largely successful, enabling the thesis to link the diverse impacts of government policy initiatives on individuals and households differentiated by class, ethnicity, gender and age to regional and national trends. The framework's ambition to examine the political dynamics of policymaking at each level of government administration, however, proved more difficult to achieve with this methodology. In particular, the number of cases examined by the thesis necessarily constrained the amount of time that could be devoted to fieldwork in any one location. As a result, I was restricted to a few weeks in each village and, at most, interviews of about an hour with officials in federal, regional, zone and *wereda* administrations. To obtain a depth of understanding of these political processes, beyond the polished account that officials try to present, often requires a long period of time gaining the trust of respondents, even to the point where the people being studied forget that the researcher is present. Within the village level case studies, over the course of several weeks in each site and a large number of interviews and observations, I gained some insights into local political dynamics, though considerably less than I had hoped for. However, these problems were particularly challenging at the meso level, regarding the important decisions made by zone and *wereda* government officials that influence the process of implementation. Consequently, this important aspect of the policymaking process is not as prominent in my analysis as I had hoped it would be.

In any study, the researcher must make key decisions regarding the balance between breadth and depth of analysis, based on the nature of the research objectives and data requirements. Despite the limitations of this thesis with respect to the depth of analysis of political processes, the choice to prioritise breadth of analysis in the design of the study are justified in terms of the thesis' empirical contributions and the identification of important links between policy areas. In particular, these include: the links between the PSNP and the agricultural system of production in which it operates; and the links between the 'land grab', the use of land as a social policy, broad trends of agrarian change and ethnic federalism.

Questions for future research

Inevitably, a project of this size and scope leaves many questions unanswered. As such, several issues that this thesis has been unable to address could constitute the starting point for future studies regarding the links between social policy, agrarian change and state-society relations.

First, analysis of regional land policies revealed that Amhara constitutes something of an exception in the details of its land policy and the discourses used by senior policymakers to justify policy choices. In particular, the regional government has removed most restrictions on land rental, while policymakers employ a liberal discourse on land, highlighting the importance of expanding farmers' livelihood choices based on their capacity to make rational decisions. This is in contrast to the paternalism common in other regions that justifies restrictions of choice based on

the existence of a 'dependency syndrome' or farmers' lack of knowledge. Preliminary analysis of the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS) sites in Amhara suggests that these reforms have had little impact on rental and land distribution. It is unclear whether this apparent continuity is the result of economic factors, such as inadequate demand for land, or because change in policy and discourse at the 'commanding heights' has not filtered down to local administrators. Future research involving detailed case studies in Amhara, along the lines of this thesis, would constitute an important test for arguments that land rental markets and freedom from state intrusion regarding land administration can contribute to economic efficiency (Deininger and Jin 2005, Bayeh Tiruneh 2009) and political transformation (Dessalegn Rahmato 2009) in Ethiopia.

Second, existing studies on the PSNP and fieldwork conducted for this thesis show that local administrations in different parts of Ethiopia took very different approaches to distribution of the PSNP during the early stages of its implementation. In many cases local administrations targeted assistance at the poorest households in food insecure villages and, studies suggest, this targeting has been relatively accurate (Sharp *et al.* 2006). However, in other parts of the country local administrations instead excluded the poorest from the PSNP, targeting support to the middle poor who are considered most likely to graduate from government assistance, while the poorest are expected to join the 'voluntary' resettlement programme (Bishop and Hilhorst 2010). Finally, my fieldwork showed that in Gebelen the local administration, in consultation with the local community, abandoned targeting and instead pursued a universal approach to distributing resources. Future research could explore the politics of this variation and support for targeting and universalism, linking case studies to national and regional political processes. This research would complement the existing literature on the politics of universalism and targeting in advanced welfare states (Esping-Andersen and Korpi 1986, Korpi and Palme 1988)

Third, further research is required regarding the links between agrarian change and state-society relations both in Ethiopia and across Africa. Agricultural investment in many African countries is transforming land tenure and systems of agricultural production, yet existing research has paid insufficient attention to the ways in which these processes are also redefining relations between states and societies. In particular, the concentration of many investment projects in areas of customary land tenure transforms structures of communal authority and expands the reach of the state in peripheral areas. These changes take place in the context of longstanding state-building processes in Africa and have the potential to contribute to the consolidation of territorial boundaries, with important implications for the politics of African states.

Finally, while this thesis has been informed by the experiences of other countries, understanding of the Ethiopian case could also be enhanced by further comparative analysis. In particular, research could usefully focus on the apparent exception of the Scandinavian countries, which managed to combine structural transformation with relative security, equality and democratisation, considering whether there are lessons to be learned that transcend national-historical contexts. In addition, future research could examine the relevance of historical processes of agrarian transformation to the 'global land grab' (Alden Wily 2012). Some researchers have previously highlighted the relevance of the enclosure movement in eighteenth and nineteenth century England (Kenny-Lazar 2011, McMichael 2011). At that time, rich landlords enclosed communal land, displacing farmers using open fields for grazing or crop cultivation, destroying the English peasantry (Polanyi 2001). The enclosure movement therefore transformed

social relations of production on farmland that was well consolidated within the state. In Ethiopia, however, agricultural investment is concentrated in remote, lowland border regions, which, though formally part of Ethiopia since the nineteenth century, have previously been only partially incorporated into the state. As such, agricultural investment in Ethiopia would seem to have elements in common with the westward expansion and displacement of Native Americans in nineteenth century United States. As in Ethiopia, this expansion not only increased state revenues but also increased the territorial control of the US, albeit through (often very large) family farms.

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Appendix A – Interview schedules

A.1. Interviews with federal and regional land administration officials

Division of responsibilities

- What are your areas of responsibility with respect to land administration?
- How are responsibilities divided between federal and regional governments?
- What role does MoARD play?
- Which donors do you work with?
- What roles do they play?

Regional variation

- What should the role of regional administrations be in setting land policy?
- Given the role of ‘nations, nationalities and peoples’ in delineating regional administrations, what role should they have in the administration of land policy?
- [in SNNPR] Given that SNNPR is recognised as a multi-ethnic region, do zones have more decision making power?
- [in SNNPR] Do ethnic groups manage their own land resources?
- Do special *wereda* or zones have a greater freedom than other zones/*wereda*?
- Which level of government is responsible for guaranteeing the rights of a farmer to agricultural land – federal or regional?
- What differences are there between the different regional land proclamations?
- What are the intentions of these differences?
- What is the role of customary authorities in land administration?
- Many places have retained clan ownership of land, in such cases how do you resolve conflicts between formal and informal rules regarding land access? [e.g. women being required to relinquish land when they move for marriage]

Land titling

- What percentage of first level land registration has been completed?
- Are there any plans for second level registration?
- What are the goals of the land registration process?
- Is a rental market one of them?
- How do donor initiatives on land registration such as ELTAP relate to the government processes?

Transfer restrictions

- Is there a distinction between cash rental and sharecropping in the proclamation or in practice?
- Are farmers allowed to be absent from their village and retain their land?
- Can they have another job at the same time?
- In practice, in this region do farmers ever lose their land because of absenteeism?
- What would happen if the restrictions on land rental were removed?

- Amhara has removed all rental restrictions but they say they have not experienced any problems, why do you think your region differs?
- What would happen if land was privatised?
- ***Specific to Amhara***
 - Why is rental less restricted than in other regions?
 - Did the federal government express any concerns about this change?
 - Other regions view the dangers of rental and sale as being similar, have people rented out their land out of distress since rental restrictions were removed?
 - What do they think of privatisation based on their experience of rental?
 - Would privatisation lead to mass evictions?
 - Why does this not happen with rental?
 - Is absenteeism allowed?
 - Are landholders allowed to have another profession?
 - Can investors rent land directly from farmers?
 - Are small farmers who rent land able to borrow against the lease?
 - Do they do this in practice?

Investors and commercialisation

- Do they have data on:
 - Land already leased to investors?
 - Land identified for investors?
- What is the process by which investors acquire land?
- Is this done at the regional or federal level?
- How does the administration decide how much land should be leased?
- What types of land are usually leased?
- Where is this land?
- Are private holdings ever leased?
- Has the second stage of ELTAP, targeting areas of high investment potential had an impact on investment?
- Are ELTAP areas included in those identified for investment?
- Can investors rent directly from the farmers or do they have to go through the government?
- What has been the reaction of regional administration to the Agricultural Investment Support Directorate?
- Has the region surrendered any land to the federal investment directorate?
- Is the AISD constitutional?

A.2. Interviews with investment officials

Government intentions

- What do you think about press coverage of ‘the land grab’?
- How does Ethiopia benefit from investment?
- Are any of the contracts publicly available?
- Do they have an example contract?
- Do you know anything about the proposed new law permitting investors to export to their home countries?
- Has there been a change in strategy from the focus on smallholders to large investors?
- Is foreign investment used to ease the foreign exchange crisis?

Companies’ intentions

- Do the intentions of private and state-sponsored companies differ?
- Do they have different impacts on Ethiopia?
- Are there differences between foreign and domestic investors?
- Why do foreign companies want to farm grain in Gambella, given the cost of transport to markets?

Social impacts

- How many people have been moved for investment?
- What compensation is paid to displaced farmers?
- Do regional governments have their own compensation proclamations?
- Are communities consulted about private land given to investors?
- Are the farmers able to manage such large sums of money?
- If farmers can manage the compensation from displacement, why can they not manage the money from the sale of land?
- If communal land is leased to investors, should the community be compensated?
- Are communities consulted about communal land given to investors?
- How do they know whether land is ‘unused’ when pastoralists frequently do not use land for grazing for a year or more?

Regulations

- What are the terms of the contracts?
 - Which level of government receives rental fees, land taxes and export taxes?
 - Are investors required to build infrastructure?
 - Are they required to teach farming practices to local people?
 - Are they required to provide a set number of jobs?
 - Are there controls on the proportion of the produce they market locally?
- Are investors able to use their lease to borrow money?
 - What does the bank do with the land if they default?

Regional variation

- How much land has been allocated to investors in each region?
- Does the federal government decide these targets? Do regions have a say?
- What has been the reaction of the regional administration to the agricultural investment directorate?
- Has the region surrendered any land to the federal investment directorate?
- Is the AISD constitutional?
- What are the cut-offs between the size of investments handled by region and federal government?
- Do emerging regions such as Gambella and Benishangul handle any investments themselves?
- Why does the federal government take a greater role in those regions?

A.3. Interviews with investors

Land leases

- Which level of government did they apply to?
- What land use plans did they have to submit with their application?
- How did they identify the land leased?
- What was the land previously used for?
- What are the terms of the lease?
 - Duration of contract?
 - Lease fee?
 - Will they have to pay land tax or rental fees?
 - Other tax exemptions?

Finance

- Do the banks accept their land leases as collateral?
- Have they borrowed money from private banks or just the development bank?

Crops

- What crops are they growing?
- Where do they expect to market the crops?
- If there is demand within Ethiopia, will they sell to that market first?
- Will it be economically viable to export crops from Ethiopia?
- Are they allowed to export grains like wheat, corn and teff?

Systems of production

- Do they use outgrowers or wage labourers?
- How many people do they hire per hectare?
- Do they hire from the local community or elsewhere?
- Do they provide any training?

A.4. Interviews with donor representatives

Land

- What is your opinion of the government's land policy?
- What would your preferred reforms be?
- Do you actively try to convince government officials?
- Why did the government implement the programme of land registration?
- What are the objectives of your programmes on land registration?
- How do these relate to the government's own land registration programme?

PSNP

- What changes have been made in the PSNP2?
- Are donors now engaging with the resettlement programme or with the OFPs?
- What is the government's opinion of progress towards graduation?
- What is required to help people to graduate from the PSNP?
- In the case that the government's graduation targets are not reached in the next 5 years, what will the donors do then?
- Has there ever been discussion regarding an urban safety net?
- Did the donors have anything to do with the urban food programmes in 2008?

Investment

- What does Ethiopia gain from investment?
- Why is the government pursuing investment as a strategy?
- What impacts are investment and the process of smallholder commercialisation likely to have on food security?
- Are any donors involved in the promotion of investment?

A.5. Interviews with residents of case study sites

Background

- Were you born here? When did you move here? Where from?
- How much land do you have?
- How did you get your land?
- Were you affected by the *Derg*/TPLF redistribution?

Current livelihood

- Do you rent in or out land?
- Do you sharecrop in or out land?
- Do you have any irrigated land?
- What crops do you grow?
- Do you use improved seeds or fertiliser? Where do you get them from?
- Do you hire wage labour?
- Do you use communal land? What for?
- Do you sell any produce?
- Do you sell produce through the commodity exchange?
- How has the price of these crops been recently?
- What about prices of inputs?
- Have prices affected your choice of crops?
- If you had more money to invest, how would you farm differently?
- Does anyone already do this?
- Could you borrow money for this? Would you if you could?
- Do you have any off-farm income?
- Do you migrate for work? Does anyone you know?

Coping strategies

- How much of your annual food requirements do you produce yourself?
- If your harvest is insufficient, what do you do?
 - Receive the PSNP?
 - Go to *iddir* or *equb*?
 - Ask relatives for help?
 - Look for wage labour?
 - Rent out your land?

PSNP

- Do you take part in the PSNP?
- How many days of public works do you do?
- In cash or food? Which is better? Is it sufficient?
- If the PSNP did not exist what would you do?
- Would you consider migration without the PSNP?
- Do only landholders get the PSNP?

- What public works programmes have been conducted?
- Have they improved people's lives? How?

Other parts of the Food Security Programme

- Is there a government resettlement programme in this village?
- Would you be willing to join the resettlement programme?
- What packages are available here?
- Which have you taken? Why?
- How long do they have to repay the loans? How much?
- What happens if people fail to repay?
- Are improved seeds and fertiliser part of the OFSPs?
- Do you think you will be able to graduate in the future?

Transfers of land

- Do many people rent land?
- Do you prefer rental or sharecropping? Why?
- Why don't rich farmers rent in more land?
- Do people ever rent out their land and move out of the village?
- Do they have jobs elsewhere?
- Has the government tried to reclaim the land?
- Do people in your community sell land now?
- Did people sell land before registration?
- What would the *kebele* do if someone did either of these things?

Landlessness

- Is landless a big problem here?
- Was there a shortage of land when you were young or is it a new thing?
- What is the cause of land shortage? (migration or population growth?)
- What does the government do for the landless?

Knowledge of the land policy

- Who owns the land you farm?
- Can you sell the land?
- Can you mortgage it?
- How much land are you allowed to rent out?
- Do you expect land to be redistributed in the future?
- Are men and women on the land certificates?
- Who is on the certificate in polygamous hhs?
- Do you expect to have the same land in 10 years?

Ethnicity

- Which ethnic group would you identify yourself as?

- What are the differences between your ethnic group and the others in the village?
- Have there ever been conflicts between the ethnic groups?
- Which group arrived in the area first?
- Are ethnic groups equally represented in the kebele administration?
- Does the kebele support everyone equally?
- Do 'non-indigenous' people have the same rights as 'locals'?
- If you had a dispute would you prefer it to be handled by elders or the courts?

Investments

- What impact has the investment had?
- What was the land previously used for?
- Do you know anyone who has had their land taken for investors?
- What compensation did they receive?
- What did they do with it?
- What have those who lost land to investors done?
- Was communal land leased to investors?
- Did you previously use that land for other purposes?
- Did the community approve the lease of land?
- Did you support it?
- If people had said no, would the lease have been stopped?
- If unhappy afterwards, have people complained since?
- What crops did they grow before?
- Did they use improved inputs?
- Do people receive the PSNP? Did they before?
- Are you better or worse off than before?
- Have other people benefitted more than you?
- What sort of jobs have the investors provided?
- Have they provided any training?
- Do the workers have contracts or day labour?
- How are the wages set?

Policy opinion

- Do you support the restriction on land sales/rental?
- What should be done for the landless and those with insufficient land?
- Is there some way that you could ask the government to do this?

Politics

- Have any opposition parties campaigned in the community? What about in 2005?
- What changes would the opposition party make if they were elected?

Appendix B – Interviews conducted

Key to interview codes

1st letter identifies the case: A – Amhara region, D – Adado, F – Ethiopia/federal level, G – Geblen, H – Hawi Gudina, I – Tigray region, K – Korodegaga, M – Gambella, O – Oromiya region, S – SNNP region, T – Turufe Kechema, W – Waqqee Xiyyoo.

2nd letter identifies the position of the respondent: D – donor agency, F – female community member, G – government, I – investor, K – kebele administration, M – male community member, N – NGO, O – opposition party, R – regional government, T – tabiya administration, Z – zonal administration, W – wereda administration.

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
AD1	Amhara	Head, Sweden-Amhara Rural Development Programme (SARDP)	Swedish Foreign Ministry	24/11/2009	Addis Ababa
AN1	Amhara	Lecturer	Institute of Land Administration, Bahir Dar University	19/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR1	Amhara	Senior expert	Amhara Bureau of Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use (BoEPLAU)	18/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR2	Amhara	Land administration expert	Amhara BoEPLAU	15/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR3	Amhara	Investment expert	Amhara BoEPLAU	18/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR4	Amhara	Expert	Investment Promotion Agency, Amhara Bureau of Trade and Industry (BoTI)	16/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR5	Amhara	Manager	Investment Promotion Agency, Amhara BoTI	16/03/2010	Bahir Dar
AR6	Amhara	Land Administration and Land Use advisor, SARDP	Orgut Consulting	16/03/2010	Bahir Dar

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
DK1	Adado	Chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	27/02/2010	Adado
DM1	Adado	Married man in 40s	Basic set of agricultural inputs	27/02/2010	Adado
FD1	Ethiopia	Senior agricultural adviser	United States' Agency for International Development (USAID)	11/11/2009	Addis Ababa
FD2	Ethiopia	Sub-regional coordinator for Eastern Africa	UN Food and Agriculture Organization	12/02/2010	Addis Ababa
FD3	Ethiopia	Senior policy adviser	USAID	11/11/2009	Addis Ababa
FD4	Ethiopia	Land administration specialist and former member of the Amhara BoEPLAU	World Bank	04/12/2009	Addis Ababa
FD5	Ethiopia	Head Donor Assistance Group on Food Security	World Bank	22/11/2009	Addis Ababa
FD6	Ethiopia	Livelihoods adviser	United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) – Ethiopia	17/09/2010	Addis Ababa
FD7	Ethiopia	Land administration specialist, Ethiopian Land Tenure and Administration Programme (ELTAP)	ARD Inc.	25/11/2009	Addis Ababa
FD8	Ethiopia	Former livelihoods adviser	DFID Ethiopia	30/03/2009	London
FD9	Ethiopia	Former lead on PSNP	DFID Ethiopia	27/02/2009	London
FG1	Ethiopia	Senior expert	Agricultural Investment Support Directorate (AISD), MoARD	28/12/2009	Addis Ababa
FG2	Ethiopia	Senior credit officer	Development Bank of Ethiopia	17/02/2010	Addis Ababa
FG3	Ethiopia	Manager	Ethiopian Investment Agency	18/02/2010	Addis Ababa
FG4	Ethiopia	Head	Land Administration and Land Use Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD)	17/01/2009	Addis Ababa
FG5	Ethiopia	Manager, Agricultural Projects Service Department	Ethiopian Sugar Development Agency	29/04/2010	Addis Ababa

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
FG6	Ethiopia	Ambassador to the United Kingdom	Government of Ethiopia	9/2/2009	London
FN1	Ethiopia	Ethiopian businessman	Independent	23/12/2009	Addis Ababa
FO1	Ethiopia	Leader	Oromo People's Congress	11/12/2009	Addis Ababa
FO2	Ethiopia	Leading member	Unity for Justice and Democracy	10/02/2010	Addis Ababa
GF1	Geblen	Landless lady in 40s, recently returned from Saudi Arabia	Landless	11/04/2010	Geblen
GF2	Geblen	Elderly widowed lady, relies on son to plough and work in PSNP	Basic set of agricultural inputs	11/04/2010	Geblen
GF3	Geblen	Married woman in 20s, landless, weaves baskets to supplement income	Landless	14/04/2010	Geblen
GF4	Geblen	Married woman in 20s, less than 1ha but irrigated from a spring	Basic set of agricultural inputs	15/04/2010	Geblen
GF5	Geblen	Married woman in 40s, less than 1ha	Basic set of agricultural inputs	09/04/2010	Geblen
GF6	Geblen	Divorced woman in 30s, sharecrops out her land	Lacking male labour to plough	14/04/2010	Geblen
GF7	Geblen	Married woman in 30s, landless, relies on PSNP and sharecropping	Landless	14/04/2010	Geblen
GF8	Geblen	Widow in 50s, sharecrops out her land	Lacking male labour to plough	16/04/2010	Geblen
GF9	Geblen	Married woman in 20s, landless, runs bar and restaurant	Landless	10/04/2010	Geblen
GF10	Geblen	Single woman in 30s with 3 children, landless	Landless	09/04/2010	Geblen
GM1	Geblen	Irob man in 60s	—	18/04/2010	Geblen
GM2	Geblen	Married man in 20s, landless, runs mill, bar and restaurant	Landless	10/04/2010	Geblen

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
GM3	Geblen	Single man in 60s, has no oxen and sharecrops out his land	No oxen to plough	07/04/2010	Geblen
GM4	Geblen	Young man in late teens, farms his mother's land with irrigation from well	Basic set of agricultural inputs	09/04/2010	Geblen
GM5	Geblen	Tigrawi man in 60s, acts as elder in dispute resolution	—	18/04/2010	Geblen
GM6	Geblen	Single man in 20s, recently left school and unemployed, living in Adigrat	Landless	11/04/2010	Geblen
GM7	Geblen	Tigrawi man in 60s	—	18/04/2010	Geblen
GM8	Geblen	Man in 50s, trader living in Adigrat but sharecrops out land in Geblen	No oxen to plough	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GM9	Geblen	Man in 50s, landless trader living in Adigrat	Landless	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GM10	Geblen	Landless man in 20s, recently returned from Saudi Arabia where he sold drugs	Landless	10/04/2010	Geblen
GM11	Geblen	Married man in 50s, 'resettled' to Humera but lives most of the year in Geblen	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	11/04/2010	Geblen
GM12	Geblen	Man in 50s of mixed Irob-Tigrawi parents	—	16/04/2010	Geblen
GM13	Geblen	Married man in 30s, landless, 'resettled' to Humera but contracted malaria and returned	Landless	10/04/2010	Geblen
GM14	Geblen	Man in 30s, trader in Adigrat, sharecrops out land in Geblen	Basic set of agricultural inputs	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GM15	Geblen	Widower in 40s with three children, landless, works in PSNP and as a labourer quarrying stone	Landless	08/04/2010	Geblen
GM16	Geblen	Married man in 40s, less than one hectare, only man with bees	Basic set of agricultural inputs	12/04/2010	Geblen

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
GM17	Geblen	Man in 50s, lawyer in Adigrat, sharecrops out land in Geblen	Basic set of agricultural inputs	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GM18	Geblen	Irob man in 80s	—	18/04/2010	Geblen
GM19	Geblen	Man in 50s, farms his wife's land	Basic set of agricultural inputs	09/04/2010	Geblen
GM20	Geblen	Man in 40s, acts as elder in dispute resolution	—	12/04/2010	Geblen
GM21	Geblen	Married man in 60s, has two children studying at university	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/04/2010	Geblen
GM22	Geblen	Married man in 60s, land irrigated from dam, receives remittances from children	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	08/04/2010	Geblen
GM23	Geblen	Man in 60s, farms his wife's land which is irrigated from a spring	Basic set of agricultural inputs	14/04/2010	Geblen
GM24	Geblen	Married man in 40s, 'resettled' to Humera but spends most of the year in Geblen with family	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	10/04/2010	Geblen
GM25	Geblen	Tigrawi man in 60s	—	18/04/2010	Geblen
GM26	Geblen	Irob man in 70s	—	16/04/2010	Geblen
GM27	Geblen	Man in 50s, less than 1ha and runs a mill	Basic set of agricultural inputs	12/04/2010	Geblen
GM28	Geblen	Man in 40s, teacher at local primary school, involved in dispute with mother and sister over land	Landless	15/04/2010	Geblen
GN1	Geblen	Emergency Programmes officer	Social and Development Coordinating Agency, Ethiopian Catholic Church	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GN2	Geblen	Water resources officer	Social and Development Coordinating Agency, Ethiopian Catholic Church	13/04/2010	Adigrat
GT1	Geblen	Chairman	<i>Tabiya</i> administration	07/04/2010	Geblen
GT2	Geblen	Manager	<i>Tabiya</i> administration	07/04/2010	Geblen

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GT3	Geblen	Credit officer	Dedebit	16/04/2010	Geblen
GT4	Geblen	Development agent for plants	<i>Tabiya</i> Agricultural Office	08/04/2010	Geblen
GT5	Geblen	Development agent for animals	<i>Tabiya</i> Agricultural Office	08/04/2010	Geblen
GT6	Geblen	Member	<i>Tabiya</i> Land Administration Committee (LAC)	15/04/2010	Geblen
GT7	Geblen	Member	<i>Tabiya</i> LAC	15/04/2010	Geblen
GT8	Geblen	Head	<i>Tabiya</i> LAC	07/04/2010	Geblen
GT9	Geblen	Secretary	<i>Tabiya</i> land court	08/04/2010	Geblen
GT10	Geblen	Finance officer	<i>Tabiya</i> land court	15/04/2010	Geblen
GT11	Geblen	Head	<i>Tabiya</i> PSNP Committee	07/04/2010	Geblen
GW1	Geblen	Head	<i>Wereda</i> EPLAUA desk	06/04/2010	Freweyni
GW2	Geblen	Expert	<i>Wereda</i> PSNP desk	06/04/2010	Freweyni
GW3	Geblen	Head	<i>Wereda</i> Youth and Social Affairs Desk	17/04/2010	Freweyni
GW4	Geblen	Extension expert	<i>Wereda</i> Agricultural Office	15/04/2010	Freweyni
HF1	Hawi Gudina	Married woman in 30s, growing castor as outgrower	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HF2	Hawi Gudina	Married woman in 20s, growing castor as outgrower	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HF3	Hawi Gudina	Married woman in 50s, resettled to the area 3 years previously from another part of W. Hararghe, outgrower	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HF4	Hawi Gudina	Married woman in 40s, resettled to the area 3 years previously from another part of W. Hararghe, outgrower	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HI1	Hawi Gudina	Former project manager	Biofuel investor	14/05/2010	Addis Ababa
HI2	Hawi Gudina	Head	Biofuel investor	07/09/2010	Addis Ababa

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HI3	Hawi Gudina	Project manager	Biofuel investor	18/09/2010	Harar
HI4	Hawi Gudina	Chinese trader	Independent	15/09/2010	Addis Ababa
HM1	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 40s, refused to grow castor as outgrower	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HM2	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 40s, refused to grow castor as outgrower	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HM3	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 40s, outgrower growing castor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/09/2010	Hawi Gudina
HM4	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 30s, outgrower growing castor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/09/2010	Chelenko
HM5	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 30s, outgrower growing castor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/09/2010	Chelenko
HM6	Hawi Gudina	Married man in 40s, outgrower growing castor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/09/2010	Chelenko
HZ1	Hawi Gudina	Investment expert	Zone Investment Commission	21/09/2010	Harar
HZ2	Hawi Gudina	Expert	Zone Cooperatives Office	21/09/2010	Harar
HZ3	Hawi Gudina	Expert	Zone Bureau of Energy and Mines	21/09/2010	Harar
IR1	Tigray	Manager	Tigray Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Use Authority (EPLAUA)	01/04/2010	Mekele
IR2	Tigray	Investment expert	Tigray EPLAUA	30/03/2010	Mekele
IR3	Tigray	Process owner	Tigray EPLAUA	29/03/2010	Mekele
IR4	Tigray	Manager	Investment agency, Tigray Bureau of Trade and Industry	01/04/2010	Mekele
IR5	Tigray	Expert	PSNP, Tigray Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development	31/03/2010	Mekele
KF1	Korodegaga	Widow in 60s, land in both irrigation schemes, son (KM1) farms land	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	18/12/2009	Korodegaga

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KF2	Korodegaga	Married woman in 30s, 0.25ha irrigated land, works as wage labourer for investor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/12/2009	Korodegaga
KF3	Korodegaga	Married woman in 30s, 0.25ha irrigated land, works as wage labourer for investor	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/12/2009	Korodegaga
KF4	Korodegaga	Married woman in 40s, landless, moved to Korodegaga from neighbouring village	Landless	20/12/2009	Korodegaga
KF5	Korodegaga	Married woman in 40s, irrigated land in NGO scheme	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	18/12/2009	Korodegaga
KI1	Korodegaga	Ethiopian investor, from local area	Independent	19/12/2009	Awash Melkasa
KK1	Korodegaga	Former chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	18/12/2009	Korodegaga
KK2	Korodegaga	Chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	18/12/2009	Korodegaga
KK3	Korodegaga	Man in 50s, acts as elder in dispute resolution	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	20/12/2009	Korodegaga
KK4	Korodegaga	Man in 50s, acts as elder in dispute resolution	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM1	Korodegaga	Single man in 20s, farms his parents land	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	18/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM2	Korodegaga	Single man in 20s, from West Arssi, sharecrops and works as day labourer on irrigated land	Landless	19/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM3	Korodegaga	Single man in 20s, landless, day labourer for investor	Landless	19/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM4	Korodegaga	Single man in 20s, from neighbouring village, rents irrigated land in Korodegaga	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM5	Korodegaga	Single man in 20s, migrant from another part of Arssi, sharecrops irrigated land	Landless	19/12/2009	Korodegaga
KM6	Korodegaga	Three male members of irrigation cooperative	—	17/12/2009	Korodegaga
KW1	Korodegaga	Head	<i>Wereda</i> Land Administration Desk	17/12/2009	Dera

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KZ1	Korodegaga	Head	Zone Land and Environmental Protection Bureau	16/12/2009	Asella
MI1	Gambella	Investor	Independent	09/12/2009	Addis Ababa
OR1	Oromiya	Senior expert	Oromiya Land Use and Environmental Protection Bureau	17/11/2009	Addis Ababa
OR2	Oromiya	Deputy head	Oromiya Bureau of Culture and Tourism	16/02/2010	Addis Ababa
OR3	Oromiya	Expert	Oromiya Investment Commission	03/02/2010	Addis Ababa
SR1	SNNPR	Land administration expert	SNNPR Department of Natural Resource and Environmental Protection	23/02/2010	Awassa
SR2	SNNPR	Environmental protection expert	SNNPR Department of Natural Resource and Environmental Protection	23/02/2010	Awassa
SR3	SNNPR	Land use expert	SNNPR Department of Natural Resource and Environmental Protection	23/02/2010	Awassa
SR4	SNNPR	Head	Investment agency, SNNPR Bureau of Trade and Industry	01/03/2010	Awassa
TF1	Turufe	Married woman in 20s, Oromo, plaintiff in land dispute	Basic set of agricultural inputs	28/01/2010	Turufe
TF2	Turufe	Married woman in 40s of Eritrean descent, works in Alage, plaintiff in land dispute	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	01/03/2010	Shashemene
TF3	Turufe	Widow in 60s, Amhara, accused in land dispute	Lacking male labour to plough	30/01/2010	Turufe
TF4	Turufe	Widow in 20s, Oromo, resisted inheritance by male relative, landless	Landless	27/01/2010	Turufe
TF5	Turufe	Widow in 40s, Oromo, resisted inheritance, head of women's affairs in <i>kebele</i>	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	27/01/2010	Turufe

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TF6	Turufe	Married woman in 40s, Oromo, model farmer	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	30/01/2010	Turufe
TF7	Turufe	Married woman in 30s, Oromo, estranged from husband	Basic set of agricultural inputs	27/01/2010	Turufe
TF8	Turufe	Married woman in 70s, Tigrawi	Lacking male labour to plough	16/01/2010	Turufe
TF9	Turufe	Single woman in 20s, Oromo, landless but did not apply for landless association	Landless	20/01/2010	Turufe
TF10	Turufe	Single woman in 20s, Oromo, in landless association, daughter of DF6	Landless	30/01/2010	Turufe
TF11	Turufe	Widow in 40s, Oromo, son farms land	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/01/2010	Turufe
TF12	Turufe	Single woman in 20s, Oromo, landless, in landless association	Landless	20/01/2010	Turufe
TK1	Turufe	Chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	19/01/2010	Turufe
TK2	Turufe	Vice-chairman and elder in dispute resolution	<i>Kebele</i> administration	13/01/2010	Turufe
TK3	Turufe	Manager	<i>Kebele</i> administration	13/01/2010	Turufe
TK4	Turufe	Development agent	<i>Kebele</i> Agricultural Office	19/01/2010	Turufe
TK5	Turufe	Member	<i>Kebele</i> Land Administration Committee (LAC)	14/01/2010	Turufe
TK6	Turufe	Member	<i>Kebele</i> LAC	13/01/2010	Turufe
TK7	Turufe	Member	<i>Kebele</i> LAC	13/01/2010	Turufe
TK8	Turufe	Member	Farmers' Cooperative Committee	28/01/2010	Hamus Gebeya
TM1	Turufe	Married man in 50s, Oromo, accused in land dispute	Basic set of agricultural inputs	31/01/2010	Turufe
TM2	Turufe	Married man in 40s, Oromo, accused in land dispute	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	30/01/2010	Turufe

Code	Case	Position / description	Organisation / access to agricultural inputs	Date interviewed	Place
TM3	Turufe	Man in 20s, married to DF1, Amhara, involved in land dispute	Basic set of agricultural inputs	28/01/2010	Turufe
TM4	Turufe	Married man in 60s, Oromo, only one oxen, shares with neighbours	Basic set of agricultural inputs	28/01/2010	Turufe
TM5	Turufe	Widower in 50s, Oromo, accused in land dispute	Basic set of agricultural inputs	26/01/2010	Turufe
TM6	Turufe	Single man in 20s, landless but sharecrops in 4.5ha, accused in land dispute	Landless	31/01/2010	Turufe
TM7	Turufe	Man in 70s, Oromo, acts as elder in disputes	—	26/01/2010	Turufe
TM8	Turufe	Man in 60s, Oromo, acts as elder in disputes	—	26/01/2010	Turufe
TM9	Turufe	Secretary	Landless association	14/01/2010	Turufe
TM10	Turufe	Widower in 80s, Oromo, sharecrops out his land	Lacking male labour to plough	16/01/2010	Turufe
TM11	Turufe	Married man in 40s, Wolayita, rents out irrigated land to save for improved seeds	Basic set of agricultural inputs	17/01/2010	Turufe
TM12	Turufe	Married man in 40s, Wolayita, has small plot of irrigated land	Basic set of agricultural inputs	14/01/2010	Turufe
TM13	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Oromo, 0.25ha of his own land, rents in 2.5ha	Basic set of agricultural inputs	20/01/2010	Turufe
TM14	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Oromo, landless, in landless association	Landless	27/01/2010	Turufe
TM15	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Tigrawi, landless, rents and sharecrops in land	Landless	16/01/2010	Turufe
TM16	Turufe	Married man in 50s, Tigrawi, has 1.75ha and rents in additional land	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	20/01/2010	Turufe

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TM17	Turufe	Married man in 60s, Kembata, displaced from the village and living in Shashemene	Landless	29/01/2010	Shashemene
TM18	Turufe	Married man in 70s, Kembata, avoided displacement	Basic set of agricultural inputs	16/01/2010	Turufe
TM19	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Oromo, from nearby town, rents irrigated land	Landless	13/01/2010	Turufe
TM20	Turufe	Married man in 40s, Tigrawi, 1ha of land and rents in extra	'Ideal' set of agricultural inputs	17/01/2010	Turufe
TM21	Turufe	Married man in 40s, Tigrawi, 0.25ha and rents in extra	Basic set of agricultural inputs	17/01/2010	Turufe
TM22	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Oromo, landless, in landless association	Landless	14/01/2010	Turufe
TM23	Turufe	Married man in 50s, Tigrawi, 0.5ha and rents in extra	Basic set of agricultural inputs	16/01/2010	Turufe
TM24	Turufe	Married man in 60s, Kembata, avoided displacement	Basic set of agricultural inputs	19/01/2010	Turufe
TM25	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Tigrawi, landless but sharecrops in land and in education	Landless	30/01/2010	Turufe
TM26	Turufe	Married man in 50s, Kembata, displaced from village, former <i>kebele</i> chairman, leader of Kembata	Landless	29/01/2010	Shashemene
TM27	Turufe	Single man in 20s, Oromo, landless but rents in 2ha	Landless	17/01/2010	Turufe
TW1	Turufe	Head	Wereda Investment Desk	11/01/2010	Shashemene
TW2	Turufe	Head	Wereda Land Administration Desk	12/01/2010	Shashemene
TW3	Turufe	Head	Wereda Agricultural Office	18/01/2010	Shashemene
TZ1	Turufe	Head	Zone Investment Commission	11/01/2010	Shashemene
TZ2	Turufe	Head	Zone Land and Environmental Protection Bureau	12/01/2010	Shashemene

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WF1	Waqqee X.	Married woman in 50s, married to member of sugar cooperative	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WF3	Waqqee X.	Married woman in 40s, member of sugar cooperative	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WF4	Waqqee X.	Widow in 60s, member of sugar cooperative	Lacking male labour to plough	13/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WF5	Waqqee X.	Married woman in 30s, member of sugar cooperative	Basic set of agricultural inputs	13/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WI1	Waqqee X.	Expert, plantation expansion	Sugar Factory	12/03/2010	Wenji
WI2	Waqqee X.	Engineer, factory expansion	Sugar Factory	09/03/2010	Wenji
WI3	Waqqee X.	Head, plantation expansion	Sugar Factory	12/03/2010	Wenji
WK1	Waqqee X.	Chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	17/12/2009	Awash Bisholla
WK2	Waqqee X.	Judge	<i>Kebele</i> administration	17/12/2009	Awash Bisholla
WK3	Waqqee X.	Chairman	<i>Kebele</i> administration	11/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WK4	Waqqee X.	Manager	<i>Kebele</i> administration	11/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WK5	Waqqee X.	Two development agents	<i>Kebele</i> Agricultural Office	13/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM1	Waqqee X.	Three men in 40s and 50s in cooperative in the new plantation, under development	Basic set of agricultural inputs	17/12/2009	Awash Bisholla
WM2	Waqqee X.	Married man in 60s, land excluded from the new plantation	Basic set of agricultural inputs	17/12/2009	Awash Bisholla
WM3	Waqqee X.	Married man in 60s, most of his land is included in the sugar plantation	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM4	Waqqee X.	Four managers	A sugar farmers' cooperative	13/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM5	Waqqee X.	Vice-chairman	A sugar farmers' cooperative	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM6	Waqqee X.	Chairman	A sugar farmers' cooperative	11/03/2010	Waqqee X.

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WM7	Waqqee X.	Married man in 60s, member of sugar cooperative	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM8	Waqqee X.	Married man in 60s, member of sugar cooperative	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM9	Waqqee X.	Single man in 20s, not a member but labourer on the plantation	Landless	11/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM10	Waqqee X.	Single man in 20s, not a member but labourer on the plantation	Landless	11/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WM11	Waqqee X.	Single man in 20s, member of the cooperative and leader of a team of workers	Basic set of agricultural inputs	10/03/2010	Waqqee X.
WW1	Waqqee X.	Vice-chair	<i>Wereda</i> Cooperatives Office	12/03/2010	Adama
WW2	Waqqee X.	Head	<i>Wereda</i> Investment Desk	08/03/2010	Adama
WW3	Waqqee X.	Expert	<i>Wereda</i> Investment Desk	08/03/2010	Adama
WW4	Waqqee X.	Head	<i>Wereda</i> Land Administration Desk	08/03/2010	Adama
WZ1	Waqqee X.	Expert	Zone Investment Commission	08/03/2010	Adama
WZ2	Waqqee X.	Expert	Zone Land and Environmental Protection Bureau	08/03/2010	Adama